DISCERNING AND NURTURING LIFE-AFFIRMING RELATEDNESS

AND RESPONSIBLE CARING:

A CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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Abstract

Discerning and Nurturing Life-Affirming Relatedness and Responsible Caring:

A Challenge to Christian Religious Education

Afrie Songco Joye

The basic problem addressed by the dissertation is how the church can make responsible caring real in the educational process so that persons can experience and live it. The issue is to articulate a theoretical understanding of life-affirming relatedness and responsible caring, and to translate the theories of relationship and care into the church's life and practice. The thesis is that the church can nurture responsible caring in the educational process if it discerns and cultivates healthy relatedness, thus fostering genuine self-understanding, responsible attachment to significant persons and causes, and meaningful participation in a faith community. At the center of all life-enhancing relatedness and caring is the divine love.

The theoretical views are defined by synthesizing psychological and theological perspectives. The study draws from the theological reflections of Daniel Day Williams whose process understanding of love and relationship are foundational to the dissertation. His views are expanded with the psychological theories of psychoanalysts Carl Jung and Erik Erikson, and the educational concepts of John Westerhoff and Thomas Groome. From these concepts, proposals emerge for educational practice in the church.

Chapter 1 introduces the problem, purpose, and theme. Chapter 2 analyzes the problem of disconnectedness and examines the concepts of life-affirming relatedness and responsible caring. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 explore Williams' theological concepts of self-knowledge, responsible attachment to persons and causes, and the faith community. Jung's theory of individuation, Erikson's concepts of intimacy and generativity, and Westerhoff's and Groome's religious education theory illumine Williams' perspectives. The three chapters include discussions of the implications for Christian education theory and practice. Chapters 6 and 7 provide comprehensive proposals for Christian education theory and practice, drawing from the selected theorists. Chapter 6 addresses the roles and tasks of pastors, lay education professionals, and lay teachers. Chapter 7 examines teaching functions and curriculum guidelines. These final chapters present the challenge of educational ministry to nurture life-affirming relatedness and responsible caring.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Statement of Problem, Purpose, and Thesis

Problem

The basic problem addressed by this dissertation is how the church can make responsible caring real in the educational process so that persons can experience and live it. The issue is how to articulate a theoretical understanding of relatedness that undergirds caring, and to translate it into the church's life and practice.

How the church can make caring real in the educational process so that persons can experience and express it in all relationships is hardly a new problem. Congregations constantly face the dilemma of how a theoretical understanding of relatedness and caring in the Christian education discipline can be translated meaningfully into everyday practice. Clergy and laity have not found easy answers. If they have discovered a key to the solution, the implementation has been a slow, tedious and frustrating, process. The issue for the church is to discover how individuals and groups can enter into and participate in relatedness and caring in ways that affirm, strengthen, and sustain life in the church and the outside world.

The dissertation will respond to three particular aspects of the problem. First, church leaders seem to search continually for ways to describe the problem of disconnectedness and to define the concept of

relatedness and caring in Christian education.[1] Cultural and psychological factors have influenced the ethos of the church, and have hampered responsible caring by over-stressing individualism and autonomy rather than interrelatedness. Also, a general malaise exists in many congregations even as they endeavor to clarify and fulfill their mission in a highly privatized, technological world.

Specifically, three key underlying factors contribute to the problem.

1. The American cultural tradition of individualism tends either to de-emphasize or to neglect the relatedness that already exists in the world.[2] In the individualist world view, relatedness appears to be an option rather than the fundamental nature of reality. The common assumption is that freedom has to do with being independent from others, and autonomy is taken to be a primary value.

2. The study of male subjects in evolving psychological and moral development theories has led to definitions of identity based on autonomy, and has consequently led to assumptions that persons grow in independence and separation from other people.[3]

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[1] The strong influence of institutions other than the church cause part of the difficulty in describing the problem of disconnectedness and defining the concept of relatedness. A 1978 Gallop poll reveals that eighty percent of North Americans concurred that their affiliation in the church or synagogue did not help them formulate their religious beliefs. Their cultural situation poses a problem for church leaders who attempt to make interrelatedness more real. Robert Bellah , et al ., Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Community in American Life (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 228.

[2] See Bellah, et al.

[3] See Carol Gilligan, In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

3. Local congregations and religious communities seem to lack the vision and the prophetic power to manifest their mission for inclusive, responsible caring.[4] Church leaders, particularly the representative ministers, tend to take less seriously their roles of being visionaries and prophets.

A second aspect of the problem is that the church in its educational approach tends to emphasize one aspect of connectedness, while losing sight of the interdependence of all dimensions. Bellah's research findings indicate that differing theological orientations of churches account for different practices and emphases.[5] Thus, particular educational emphases result when a church focuses on one dimension of relatedness. The stress on self-development in a theologically liberal church, for instance, may lead to a strong inner self relatedness, while the focus on scriptural authority and disciplined study in a conservative church may enhance relatedness to the Christian tradition.

A third aspect of the problem is that the church has not fully dealt with helping persons discern and cultivate relatedness and caring in the educational process. Much of the church's functioning demonstrates its lack of effectiveness to enable persons to express caring. Churches find

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[4] Kristine M. Rogers and Bruce A. Rogers, Paths to Transformation: A Study of the General Agencies of The United Methodist Church (Nashville: Abingdon, 1982) , 79. Marc Ellis says that the Jewish community needs desperately "a new angle of vision" to manifest the meaning of liberation as the people of God. Marc Ellis, Toward a Jewish Theology of Liberation: The Uprising and the Future (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1987) , 109.

Because of the need for a clear sense of vision and for a specific focus on goals, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) adopted in its June 1989 General Assembly in Louisville, Kentucky a statement of visions and goals for the 1990s. See Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) General Council, General Assembly Minutes, June 1989. See also Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), "Vision for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)," TS, n.p., 1989.

[5] See Bellah, et al., 227- 32.

of effectiveness to enable persons to express caring. Churches find incongruity in their beliefs, values, attitudes, and behavior. The most frequent criticism of people who turn against the church, Bellah says, is the inconsistency between people's beliefs and action.[6]

The following definitions are offered as starting points to clarify key terms.

Life-enhancing relatedness is a dynamic process that enables persons to renew and strengthen their relationships with the inner self, significant persons, a faith community, the divine Being, and the world.[7] This process, which leads to enhancing and sustaining life, is characterized by integrity and congruence in personal beliefs, values, behavior, and attitudes. The term relatedness, with the important qualifier "life-enhancing," is chosen here in order to convey a strong interactive relationship between the person and the inner self, other persons, and the Other. The opposite of life-affirming is life-negating relatedness. This relatedness weakens and destroys caring and just relationships. Both the positive and negative forms of relatedness are pervasive realities in social relationships. The term connectedness will be

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[6] Ibid., 234.

[7] The definition is influenced by Daniel Day Williams, a contemporary process theologian who wrote a comprehensive and systematic theology of Christian love. In his writings, Williams emphasizes human relatedness or relationship (the terms he uses primarily for connectedness) to God the Creator and Redeemer, to oneself, to others, to the church, and to the world. See D.D. Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love (New York: Harper, 1968), and Essays in Process Theology , ed. Perry LeFevre (Chicago: Exploration, 1985).
Carol Gilligan, a psychologist and an educator, has advocated for and claimed the human need for relationship. See Gilligan, In a Different Voice.
As a foundation for connectedness, the covenant theme in the Scripture will be stressed. See Walter Brueggemann, "Covenanting as Human Vocation: A Discussion of the Relation of Bible and Pastoral Care, Interpretation 33, no. 2 (1979) : 115-29.

used interchangeably with relatedness, since this term is also used in the literature.

The emphasis on connectedness, or relationship, has been strong in: (1) feminist thought where the terms describe a concept of the self as finding, creating and maintaining identity in relationship with others,[8] and (2) process theology, where an emphasis is placed on the ongoing relatedness of beings and experiences.

Caring is "an action in love" that expresses the imago Dei nature of persons and that emanates from an experience of God's creative love.[9] It is the capacity to think, feel, speak, and act on behalf of others in ways which lead to the development of full human potential.[10] Caring is an outward expression of an inner relatedness with God and God's creations. From the Christian perspective, such caring is an essential expression of servant ministry, as exemplified in Christ's life and work.

The contention of the dissertation is that congregations can enhance caring in the educational process if they enable persons to discern, perceive, and cultivate life-affirming connectedness in all dimensions of relationships. The central argument of this dissertation is that the enhancement of

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[8] Gilligan, 17, 21, 23, 47-9, 164. See Jean Baker Miller, Toward a Psychology of Women (Boston: Beacon, 1976), 83-97. See also Nona Lyons, "Two Perspectives of Self, Relationships, and Morality," Harvard Educational Review 53 (May 1983) : 53, 125-45, and Mary Field Belenky, et al. , Women's Ways of Knowing: Development of Self, Voice, and Mind (New York: Basic, 1986) , 102.

[9] Nel Noddings gives a basic definition of caring that is similar to this stated one. See Nel Noddings, Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984) , 9-26, 30, 83.

[10] Daniel Day Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls (New York: Harper, 1961) , 17.

responsible caring demands that congregations discern and strengthen the many interdependent dimensions of relatedness. Life-affirming relatedness results in responsible caring. Caring becomes holistic as persons discern and strengthen their connectedness with God, themselves, others, a faith community, and the world. The fundamental question that the church has repeatedly raised is this: how can responsible caring be enhanced and persuasively influence the decision-making and ongoing life of the church? The church needs to respond to the underlying issue of discerning and strengthening relatedness if it is to bring about responsible caring. The dissertation confronts the issue by describing initially the problem of disconnectedness and its underlying causes.

The over-all problem is paradoxically both simple and complex. Problems of a theory-practice gap and of differing ideological emphases on relatedness and caring have confronted various disciplines. The problem confronts the academy, churches, and the larger society. Obvious manifestations of the problem, particularly the discrepancies between the nature of the church and the ways of church functioning, permeate various sectors of religious communities. People discover an apparent complexity in the perennial, nagging presence of the problem and have no close sight of a solution. Churches have responded with different alternative solutions ,and yet the problem has continued to plague churches.

Purpose

The three-fold purpose of the dissertation is: (1) to redefine and clarify the problem of disconnectedness and to describe and amplify the concepts of connectedness and caring; (2) to examine a process theologian's views on the different dimensions of relationship, considering complementary

psychological and educational perspectives; and (3) to give comprehensive proposals for educational practice.

<div align="center">

Thesis

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The thesis is that the church can nurture responsible caring in the educational process if it discerns and cultivates relatedness in all dimensions. Genuine self-understanding, meaningful participation in a faith community and responsible attachment to significant persons and causes evoke life-enhancing relatedness.

At the center of all life-enhancing relatedness and caring is the divine love. The theoretical views will be defined and conceptualized by synthesizing psychological and theological perspectives. From these concepts, proposals will emerge for educational practice in the church. The discernment and cultivation of multi-dimensional relatedness with self, God, others, a faith community, and the world, shall impact Christian education theory and practice, particularly the educational roles and functions of the ordained and diaconal ministers, church school teachers and leaders, curriculum design, methodology, and the quality of congregational life. The challenge to Christian religious education is how to enhance responsible caring. This dissertation will demonstrate that responsible caring is rooted in several dimensions of relatedness. Christian education faces the vital task to initiate and sustain all forms of life-enhancing relatedness.

The study draws from the theological reflections of Daniel Day Williams whose process understanding of love and relationship are foundational to the dissertation. His views will be expanded with the psychological concepts of psychoanalysts Carl G. Jung and Erik Erikson, and the educational concepts of John Westerhoff and Thomas Groome. Proposals for educational practice will be based largely upon the theoretical concepts of these authors.

At the outset, the study includes the following underlying assumptions:

1. Relatedness is a "given." Interrelated and interdependent entities constitute the world.[11]

2. Relatedness can be life-affirming or life-negating.

3. When we cultivate life-affirming relatedness in its multi-dimensional aspects, we grow in caring.

4. The church offers a context for Christian education where persons can grow in discerning and experiencing life-enhancing relatedness and caring.

Importance of the Dissertation

The unique contribution of this dissertation is to offer a paradigm in which the church, through Christian education, can enable persons to understand and cultivate healthy relatedness and responsible caring. Based upon the theological views of Daniel Day Williams and illumined by psychological and educational perspectives, the study will inform and guide Christian education practice. The dissertation will be useful primarily to clergy and lay persons who are concerned with Christian education and with holistic caring ministry.

No articles have been published nor research reviewed by Religious Education that give concrete proposals for educational praxis to enhance caring and relatedness, and none have been based upon the theology of D. D.

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[11] The central concept of Alfred North Whitehead, which has influenced Daniel Day Williams' theology, is the concept of "actual entities." Whitehead says that these are dynamic moments or "drops of experience which the world is made up." They are interrelated and interdependent. See Alfred North Whitehead, Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology, corrected edition, eds. David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (New York: Free Press, 1978), and Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas (New York: Macmillan, 1937), 197, 292. See also Donald W. Sherburne, ed., A Key to Whitehead's Process and Reality (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966), 205-6.

Williams and the concepts of the selected theorists. In addition, the Religious Studies Review has not listed dissertation subjects which relate specifically to the proposed study. Some earlier works of Martin Buber, Lewis Sherrill, Reuel Howe, and Randolph Miller do deal with some aspects of relationship.[12] Their writings deal with concrete issues, approaches and content, but are not so comprehensive as the proposed dissertation in developing an educational theory and practice of relationship. Buber posits that the I-Thou relationship is essential for authentic dialogue and relatedness with God and between persons. Lewis Sherrill emphasizes the relationship between God and persons as one of "confrontation " (God's side of relation) and "encounter" (person's side). Howe's works point out the importance of relationships of love in Christian nurture; he also focuses on the implications of the biblical theology of love for different arenas of relationships. Miller stresses relational theology in Christian education in which theology serves as a basic tool to bring about right relationship between learners and God within the context of the church.

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[12] See Reuel Howe, Herein is Love: A Study of the Biblical Doctrine of Love (Valley Forge: Judson, 1961).

In The Gift of Power, Lewis Sherrill emphasizes the relationship between God and human beings as one of "confrontation" (God's side of relation) and "encounter" (person's side). See Lewis Sherrill, The Gift of Power (New York: Macmillan, 1955) and The Struggle of the Soul (New York: Macmillan, 1958).

Another important figure who posits a profound concept of relationship is Martin Buber. In I and Thou, Buber points out that connectedness with God, with oneself, with other persons, and with the world occurs in a life of I-Thou relationship, not I-It. It is through this kind of mutuality that we experience genuine, meaningful life. To further explore the concept of the I and Thou relations, see Buber, I and Thou (New York: Scribner's, 1958), 3-32, 61-72, 99-103.

Randolph Crump Miller emphasizes the language of relationship in Christian education. See Randolph C. Miller, The Clue to Christian Education (New York: Scribner's, 1950) and Christian Nurture and the Church (New York: Scribner's, 1961).

Scope and Limitation

The study does not attempt to explicate the various concepts of love from Williams' work, or the concepts of the unconscious, intimacy, generativity and faith community in a broad general survey of literature; nor does it give a full review of any of the theorists' work. Rather, the study will emphasize Williams' theological reflection as it relates to the selected areas of study, and it will draw from the complementary psychological and educational perspectives of the aforementioned theorists. Other theological perspectives will not be elaborated.

Methods and Resource

Library research drawing mainly from the writings of the theorists will be used. Resources for the proposal will include the writer's personal experience of doing Christian education in the local and national levels of the church. D. D. Williams' writings will be a primary source in all chapters, particularly in chapters two, three, and four.

In chapter 2, section A, the problem will be analyzed beginning with the contributing factors as identified earlier. The research work of Bellah and Carol Gilligan will be used as references in identifying two of the three key factors that contribute to the problem. The distance between the theoretical understanding of connectedness and caring in Christian education and the church's actual functioning will be examined. Section B will examine the concept of relatedness and caring using insights from process theology (D. D.Williams), the scriptures (the covenant theme) and psychology (Carol Gilligan and Nel Noddings).

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 will explore Williams' theological concepts of self-knowledge, responsible attachment to persons and causes, and the faith community. Williams' views will be expanded by using the thoughts of the

selected theorists. In addition, each chapter will include a discussion of the implications of the specific concepts for Christian education theory and practice.

In chapter 3, Williams' concept of self-understanding will be examined, with added insights from Carl Jung whose methodological approach to self-knowledge brings light to Williams' theological analysis. Implications for Christian education will conclude the section.

In chapter 4, Williams' view of responsible relationship will be explored, with emphasis on social justice, aided by Erikson's concept of intimacy and generativity. Erikson's emphasis on intimacy (i.e., attachment to persons and causes) and generativity (i.e., guiding, tending and being responsible for future generations and for a better society) underscore important turning points in young and middle adulthood. Implications will be drawn for the educational process.

Chapter 5 will present Williams' thinking on the faith community and its role in strengthening life-affirming relationships. Perspectives from John Westerhoff and Thomas Groome on faith community will be included. Educational implications for the church's ministry will be presented.

Chapters 6 and 7 will provide comprehensive proposals for Christian education theory and practice, drawing from the selected theorists. Chapter 6 will address the issues of the roles and relationships of pastors, lay education-professionals, and lay teachers. Chapter 7 examines and proposes teaching functions and curriculum guidelines. These final chapters present ways the various educational components can help nurture relatedness and responsible caring in and through the church.

CHAPTER 2

The Church's Problem and a Clue to Solution

The thrust of this chapter is to define the problem of disconnectedness and to examine the specific aspects of the problem and the underlying factors that contribute to the problem. The second portion of the chapter will be an exploration and analysis of the concept of relatedness, or connectedness, and caring, using Daniel Day Williams' concept of love as foundation for understanding these value-laden terms.

Disconnectedness

Several forces contribute to the problem of disconnectedness: (1) a strong cultural orientation of individualism, (2) a common assumption in psychology that autonomy and independence are the basis for identity, (3) the ethos of institutional churches that emphasize one dimension of relatedness while neglecting the other dimensions, and (4) the congregations' or parishes' lack of clear vision and prophetic power to communicate the church's primary purpose.

A critical dimension of understanding disconnectedness comes from the concept of brokenness. To be disconnected means to experience broken relationships, brokenness in relationships that are vital and indispensable to a life of meaning. Disconnectedness is a conscious or unconscious denial of the fundamental reality of human relatedness with God, with others, with the inner self, and with the world. Basically, personal separation from God due to

human stubbornness and pride leads to brokenness and disconnectedness. Persons who feel no need for such connections continually search for meaning in life. Daniel Day Williams says that we break our relationship with God and with others when we violate our essential nature of the imago Dei.[1] Persons corrupt what is inherently good, beautiful, and harmonious in themselves and in the world. Congregations face disconnectedness when faced with divisiveness, turmoil, disharmony, and pride. These are caused by individual self-interest and by a struggle for power rather than cooperation with the Spirit of Power in redemptive acts.

Individualism

Sociologist Peter Berger discloses a crucial underlying factor in the problem of disconnectedness. He postulates that a major dilemma of churches is the tension they face between over-attachment to secular values, on the one hand, and disengagement from the concerns of contemporary life in society, on the other hand.[2] To lean heavily to secular values poses the danger of failure to take seriously and intentionally the biblical message. A recent research study shows that fundamentalist churches face a two-fold major dilemma of not bending to society's demand for change and of offering people an unbending set of moral laws.[3] They tend to fear change posed by the encounter of issues in modern society. Liberal churches, on the other hand, face the predicament of being so

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[1] Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls, 72.

[2] Restated by John C. Harris, Stress, Power and Ministry (Washington, D.C: Alban Institute, 1977) : 8. See Peter L. Berger and Richard John Neuhaus, Movement and Revolution (New York : Doubleday, 1970), 20-30.

[3] See Nancy Tatom Ammerman, Bible Believers: Fundamentalists in the Modern World (New Brunswick : Rutgers University Press, 1987).

immersed in the contemporary cultural ethos that they tend to lose a firm grasp of the biblical message.[4] They "accommodate" and "over-identify" with modernity and secularism to the extent that they downplay and neglect significant religious, biblical meanings and symbols.

A highly privatized, technologically equipped society sets a cultural pattern and a lifestyle that encourage self-fulfillment devoid of commitment to the Source of life and to a faith community. Part of the problem arises from lack of discernment of relatedness and responsible caring. The other reason stems from the satisfaction of momentary pleasures and success without any effort to cultivate one's relatedness. Further, the church has not offered enough challenge to make a difference in people's perception and values. The inability of churches to deal with such common cultural and psychological phenomena fosters disconnectedness rather than relatedness.

The pervasive cultural individualism in the United States tends to block the full expression of relatedness in its varied dimensions. The recent research findings of Robert Bellah and his colleagues claim that individualism is alive and well in the 1980s and predictably into the twenty first century. The findings seem to have eroded a presupposition of researcher Daniel Yankelovich that a new generation of persons committed to serve others has begun to appear, which will represent more relatedness than the "me" generation, i.e., more self-serving than self-giving lifestyle and values.[5] The

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[4] John Harris, 8. Liberal churches seek to adapt themselves to the secular world by redefining theological insights and perspectives in ways that diminish the crucial place of biblical truth, point out Wade Clark Roof and William McKinney. See Wade C. Roof and William McKinney, American Mainline Religion: Its Changing Shape and Future (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987), 79.

[5] Daniel Yankelovich, New Rules : Searching for Self-Fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down (New York: Bantam, 1981), 241-62.

pervasive response of Roman Catholics to the U.S. Catholic Bishops' pastoral letter on the national economy, for instance, reveals a resurgence of hyper-individualism. [6] Catholic Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee says that Americans are afraid of a community, or "collectivism," that would repress individuals' full expression and development of their identity, and thus they cannot perceive the difference between collectivism and hyper-individualism. He concludes that many people these days fail to apply the meaning of the concept of the "common good." Radical individualism tends to promote self-serving motives and action that breeds egoism, selfishness, apathy, and callousness towards social ills and problems. The inability to grapple with growing problems of the society characterize radically individualistic people. The church faces the challenge of enabling persons to balance social action and individual piety.

Alexis de Tocqueville's observations and analysis of the United States, after traveling for a year in 1831, were recorded in his book Democracy in America. He painstakingly reveals individualism as a primary characteristic of the changing American culture.[7] He defines individualism as "a calm and considered feeling which disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the mass of his fellows and withdraw into the circle of family and friends; with

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The latest findings of William McKinney and Wade Clark Roof on the American mainline churches confirm the assessment of Robert Bellah and his colleagues that the characteristic of American religion has shifted more towards greater individualism and farther away from collectivism and commitment to community. See Roof and McKinney, 33.

[6] James M. Wall, ed. "Events and People," Christian Century, 105 (1988): 184.

[7] See Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, trans. George Lawrence, ed. J.P. Mayer (New York: Doubleday, 1969).

his little society formed to his taste, he gladly leaves the greater society to look after itself."[8] Isolation and withdrawal from the larger society characterize individualism, according to Tocqueville. The person's community consists mainly of the basic social unit, the family, and the primary group of intimate friends. This characteristic value places the individual as the dominant reality above society. He observed the privatized and individualistic way of life that falls short of outreach for persons beyond the immediate primary community; he expressed concern for the impact of individualism and autonomy on a democratic society.

Using Tocqueville's work as a beginning point, Bellah and his colleagues claim that the ethos of radical individualism prevails in the American society.[9] The language, value, and experience of individualism seem to outrun that of relatedness and caring. Their penetrating analysis shows that Americans constantly face the inner tension between intensely wanting autonomy and equally intensely longing for community and commitment in their search for meaningful existence. Bellah and his co-authors stress the need for more relationships, or community, along with individual freedom and creativity. They envision a new "social-moral ecology" based on community and commitment and characterized by caring.[10] The conclusions of their brilliant study challenge the readers to look more closely into the concept of relatedness and caring.

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[8] Ibid., 37.

[9] See Bellah, et al.

[10] Ibid., 286-90, 335.

Looking at recent social trends in the American society, some argue that the 1960s' social activism, which was largely initiated from college campuses and community organizations, was an attempt to move beyond personal interest and be more of service to others. Churches, however, failed to build on the vision of service put forth by student activists. The generation of activists and idealists maintained that they could function effectively without the direct assistance and encouragement from churches. The 1970s' trend was toward emphasis on the inner life, and this led to social withdrawal. The searching society of the 1980s needs to see the relevance of life-affirming relationships and responsible caring.

In a culture of individualism, personal growth, freedom, autonomy, success, and self-fulfillment override a sense of commitment and urgency to serve other's needs. The problem of disconnectedness arises partly because of the cultural tradition defining identity in relation to autonomy. This promotes more seeking after individual achievements than service for others. It blocks the cultivation of responsible caring. A strong influence of individualism is seen in the life of the church when church members push for their own agenda to the point that they threaten to discontinue their attendance, giving, and membership if their agenda are not addressed. This is evident when participation is high in activities that nourish members and when response to serving programs is low.

Bellah and his colleagues envision a continuing movement to advocate for and work towards a stronger commitment to life-affirming relationships and caring, without denial or suppression of individualism. Some committed clergy, professional educators, and lay leaders hold similar vision. The

tension persists, however, between serving one's personal interest and seeking to maintain individual freedom, on the one hand, and serving the well-being of others and wanting to relate to them, on the other hand. Research findings show that almost all respondents agree that relationships with others are essential in gaining self-confidence, self-worth, and happiness. [11]

Congregations can confront the problem of disconnectedness caused by radical individualism by communicating the mission of the church as the Body of Christ and by equipping members for servant ministry. When persons discern the meaning and implications of responsible caring and relatedness, they tend to be motivated to connect and to care for others. The problem is lack of discernment, not simply knowledge. Discernment involves perception, reorientation, and transformation. Beliefs, values, behavior, and attitude change as perception changes. The church can be a catalyst for change if it advocates and works for a continuing movement among its members and the community to strengthen responsible caring without denying or suppressing individualism and autonomy. God's ongoing creative work and the gifts of individual persons and a faith community provide necessary resources and tools to strengthen relatedness and caring. Bellah proposes a continuing movement to balance the emphasis between personal pursuit and compassionate service to others.

Autonomy and Independence

A second factor contributing to disconnectedness is the use of male subjects as life-cycle models and the consequent male norms emerging in

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[11] Ibid., 84.

developmental research. The psychological and moral development theories using primarily male subjects for study underscore the linkage between autonomy and identity. This has led to cultural perceptions and assumptions that independence and separation from others characterize personal growth and enhance identity. The recent studies of Carol Gilligan and Anne Wilson Schaef reveal that men tend to perceive themselves in terms of autonomy, while women tend to view themselves in terms of relationships.[12] Men's values often center on freedom, and they base their morality on rights and achievement. Women's values often focus on equality, and they function largely in an ethical mode based on care and responsibility. The prevailing male-oriented life cycle emphasis in the works of theorists Jean Piaget, Lawrence Kohlberg, and Erik Erikson has brought a two-fold assumption that autonomy leads to self-identity, and that men have a greater capacity to move into that direction than women.[13] Such a view of the self highlights freedom, rights, and fairness in decision-making, but relatedness and caring also must play a key role.

Although much developmental research has been based on female subjects, the theories have often been formulated initially from studies of male subjects or by male theorists. Elizabeth Janeway asserts that Erikson's experiment of boys and girls at play tends to stereotype the female as primarily interested in people, feelings, and the indoors, which is symbolic of the "dark and passive," and the male as mainly concerned with things, ideas,

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[12] See Gilligan, In a Different Voice. See also Anne Wilson Schaef, Women's Reality : An Emerging Female System in the White Male Society (Minneapolis: Winston, 1981).

[13] Gilligan, 10-13, 18-22.

and the outdoors, which symbolizes something "bright and active."[14] Gilligan asserts that Piaget's observation in his study of boys' and girls' response to the rules of the game tends to "equate male development with child development."[15] Boys' concern with rules and with the legal ramifications of following rules and playing fair, and girls' concern with consensus building and relationship does not necessarily make boys more advanced in moral development, says Gilligan. Understanding and caring for individuals, which women tend to value, is an important dimension of human development and should not be overlooked or deemphasized.

Mary Field Belenky and her colleagues, Blythe M. Clinchy, Nancy R. Goldberger, and Jill M. Tarule, who wrote Women's Ways of Knowing, affirm Gilligan's position that most women stress relationships and a morality of care and responsibility, and most men, rights and rules.[16] Like Gilligan, Lyons, and Schaef, Belenky and her colleagues have critiqued Kohlberg and Piaget on their moral development concepts. They were convinced some years ago on Lawrence Kohlberg's position that development is the purpose of education.[17] Now they feel that parts of Kohlberg's thinking make them

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[14] Elizabeth Janeway, Man's World, Women's Place: A Study in Social Mythology (New York: Morrow, 1971), 8. The discussion of Erik Erikson's experiment can be found in his book, Childhood and Society, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton, 1963), 97-108. See also Erik Erikson, Identity, Youth, and Crisis (New York: Norton, 1968), 268-74 for specific reference to feminine role.

[15] Gilligan, 9, 10, 16. See also Janet Lever, "Sex Differences in the Games Children Play," Social Problems 23, no. 4 (April 1976):478-87. See Jean Piaget, The Moral Judgment of the Child, trans. Marjorie Gabain (New York: Free Press, 1965).

[16] Belenky, et al., Women's Ways of Knowing, 8, 101-02. Belenky and her colleagues use Gilligan's terms "separate knowing" and "connected knowing" for the kinds of epistemological orientation that emphasize rules and relationships, respectively.

[17] Ibid., 228.

feel uncomfortable. The uneasiness stems from Kohlberg's and Piaget's use of males in their early research, and the concept of the natural directions of moral development "toward principled moral judgment and an epistemology based on standard (and separate) principles of scientific of scientific method serving as the basis of rational reflection."[18] Belenky and colleagues point out that understanding a connected mode of knowing is crucial, recognizing the relationship between the individual and the object of knowing. Kohlberg and Piaget have focused more on the knowing of primary ideas, despite the fact that the epistemological approach attempts to heighten our understanding of the knowing process. Because women tend to focus on relationships, Belenky and her colleagues contend that in order to help women develop their own authentic selves, we need to emphasize (1) "connection over separation," (2) "understanding and acceptance over assessment," and (3) "collaboration over debate."[19] These three foci resemble Gilligan's stance.

A major part of the problem emerges from the patriarchal systems of leadership and authority in families, churches, and societies. For example, a group of feminist anthropologists report that patriarchal systems exist in all the cultures they know.[20] Patriarchal relationships are characterized by a hierarchical mode with upper and lower ranking of persons, rather than a network or a web in which persons treat each other equally. This cultural

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[18] Ibid., 228-29. See also Lawrence Kohlberg and Rochelle Mayer, "Development as the Aim of Education," Harvard Educational Review 42 (1972): 449-96.

[19] Ibid., 229.

[20] Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, eds., Women, Culture, and Society (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 3, 70.

tradition has been questioned but continues to dominate a large segment of society.

Gerda Lerner, author of The Creation of Patriarchy, claims that the system of patriarchy has functioned for several millenia because women have cooperated with the system and process.[21] She says, women have "participated in the process of their own subordination because they have been psychologically shaped so as to internalize the idea of their own inferiority."[22] Paternalism has dominated since women have been deprived of education, knowledge, economic resources, political power; and they have been indoctrinated in the idea of male superiority. The problem will continue to pervade our homes, work places, churches, and society as long as women remain naive and accepting of the ideology and system of patriarchy.

The traditional practice of patriarchy and the psychological perception that persons grow through independence and separation from others have influenced the life and practices of the church. Despite the increasing number of women and the greater amount of volunteer work they do, men still make many important decisions. Also, male-associated values often dominate. For example, congregations tend to make decisions without cognizance of the many different values present within the congregation, some of which are traditionally associated with men and others associated with women. Decisions are often based less on compassion than on rights and rules. In budget cuts, staff reduction, program changes, and operational matters,

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[21] See Gerda Lerner, The Creation of Patriarchy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[22] Ibid., 218.

many congregations face tension between fairness and rightness, on the one hand, and responsibility and care, on the other hand.

Congregation's Lack of Vision

As pointed out, a cultural tradition of individualism and a psychological perception of autonomy as a basis of identity, and the emphasis on one-dimensional relatedness strongly contribute to disconnectedness in the churches and parishes. A third factor contributing to disconnectedness is the lack in many local congregations of vision and prophetic power to communicate the nature and mission of the church. In A Gathering of Strangers: Understanding the Life of Your Church, Robert Worley sets the biblical and theological framework for what the church is, and presents the crucial issue of the relationship between theology and the life of the church (practice of ministry).[23] The church's ministry should manifest its theology; and theology should undergird church life. He suggests that disconnectedness exists when congregations fail to express Christian faith in individual and corporate living. Congregations that primarily emphasize the amount of budget and membership and neglect to meet their own people's needs for relatedness and caring show an obvious separation of theology and church practice. Taking into account a recent study on the present state of the church, practical theologian and professor of church ministry Robert Worley points out that congregations long for a worthwhile vision of a more humane, responsible and caring community of faith.[24] They want to see the church moving closer to fulfilling the vision that manifests the integration and

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[23] Robert Worley, A Gathering of Strangers: Understanding the Life of Your Church (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), 103.

[24] Ibid., 122.

relatedness of its life and ministry. A study of church growth and decline suggests that despite mainline Protestant endeavors to manifest the meaning of Christian community in a technological and troubled world, they have not captured a vision that inspires and challenges the vast constituency.[25] In an earnest effort to respond to needs arising from highly technological development, mainline liberal churches have initiated social ministries that have directly benefitted the poor and the oppressed. Yet, they have been unable to respond fully to people's quest for answers to life's meaning.[26] With the predominance of "high tech," churches need more "high touch," i.e., strengthening of people's healthy connection with others and with the Other in the faith community. Having a clear vision, a focused goal, and an awareness of mission precedes this action. Becoming prophetic and visionary, a parish or a church moves into becoming a community of care. The reverse situation is also true. When people lack the vision, they tend to become impotent in communicating the church's purpose for being. Thus, they lack authenticity in their message and actions of responsible caring.

Church leaders face a tremendous responsibility to instill the vision in themselves and to empower their congregations to create and catch a vision of responsible care. Yet church leaders seem to lag in this regard. A national survey conducted with ordained and diaconal ministers of one denomination reveals that 63 percent place low priority in reaching the inactives; 51 percent and 42 percent of the 365 respondents (304 serving local churches)

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[25] James H. Smylie, "Church Growth and Decline in Historical Perspective: Protestant Quest for Identity, Leadership, and Meaning," eds. Dean R. Hoge and David Roozen, Understanding Church Growth and Decline, 1950-1978 (New York: Pilgrim, 1979), 91.

[26] Ibid., 70. See Dean Kelley, Why Conservative Churches Are Growing: A Study in Sociology of Religion (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1977).

rank low their involvement in social issues and evangelistic outreach to the unchurched, respectively.[27] The ministers' perceptions of their congregations' practice of ministry show that approximately 200 of the 304 churches do little or some work in social action, mission, clarifying their vision for mission, and Bible study. Lack of concern for some critical tasks might have contributed to the continuing loss of membership and possibly vitality in the mainline churches.

Perhaps ministerial leadership has inadequately provided the impetus for congregational expressions of care. Perhaps the message preached in corporate worship and taught in group study has not permeated the faith community and larger relational settings. Bishop Richard B. Wilke has expressed a concern of his fellow United Methodist bishops that many pastors in the denomination have lost the enthusiasm and passion to proclaim the kingdom of God for which they are called.[28] They seem to lack the motivation, the energizing push to foster conversion and transformation in individual and congregational life.

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[27] The national survey was conducted by the author in 1989 largely by mail. A questionnaire was sent to a randomly selected group of 30 bishops, 91 district superintendents and 3 conference program council directors of The United Methodist Church in the United States. Three hundred sixty-five ministers completed and returned the questionnaire. Three hundred two serve as local church ministers and sixty-three are mainly bishops and district superintendents from twelve conferences in all five jurisdictions across the country, from Alaska and California to Florida. Almost all of the respondents were clergy. The questionnaire was adapted from one designed by Donald P. Smith, Congregations Alive: Practical Suggestions for Bringing Your Church to Life Through Partnership in Ministry (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1981). A sample copy of the survey and an outline summary of findings are found in the appendix.

[28] Richard B. Wilke, And Are We Yet Alive?: The Future of the United Methodist Church (Nashville: Abingdon, 1986), 96.

A large number of the respondents in Bellah's research are described as religious individualists; they reject organized religion, or the institutional church, because they observe a general ambience of hypocrisy among church members. They see some inconsistency between people's beliefs about virtues and people's attitudes and ways of living.[29] One of the most frequent criticisms is that churchgoers do not care enough or that they fail to practice the moral principles that they themselves preach and teach. Based upon the specific respondents' view, the church faces the challenge to cultivate caring action.

Genuine concern for others emerges from a discernment of the church's task of servant ministry as Christ exemplified in his life. To care is both a pastoral and a prophetic task and an ethical Christian responsibility. The pastoral dimension stresses the church's task to support and sustain life to enhance relationships and to heal broken relationships. The prophetic function involves caring through acts of social justice with the helpless, powerless, oppressed people, who are victims of a dehumanizing society.

One-Dimensional Relatedness

Another element of the problem lies in the emphasis on one aspect of relatedness, rather than the interconnectedness of all relationships. The prevailing theological orientation in a congregation discloses the emphasis on a certain dimension of relatedness, which is evident in its educational practices. For example, Bellah's research discloses that the educational practice in a theologically liberal, mainline church tends to stress self-development with heavy psychological guidelines in teaching content and

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[29] Bellah, et al. , 284.

process.[30] Self-development refers to the cultivation of one's full potentials and gifts. The self becomes what Bellah calls a "cosmic principle." Persons create and re-create a world within and outside themselves that gives them a secure sense of who they are, how they fit in, and where they are heading. The present moments of experiences are explored in order to enable the self to grow.

Bellah asserts that the "needs of individual psyches" become a central concern, particularly in liberal churches.[31] For example, involvement with refugee families, homosexuals, environmental protection, and hunger prevention in developing countries can even be done for the growth of the individual psyche, although these projects involve relatedness and caring for others.[32] God becomes the granter of the fulfilled higher self. This optimistic ethos often ignores or excludes the place of sin and evil in human predicament. Daniel Day Williams has affirmed neo-orthodox theology for its firm stance on the sinfulness of humanity, which can be understood in terms of human misuse of freedom and deliberate turning away from God.[33] He has

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[30] Ibid, 228-32.

[31] Bellah, et al. , 232.

[32] Involvement in social programs and social justice issues has been a strong focus of liberal churches. Other liberal values contribute to persons' understanding and growth of faith: emphasis on process, e.g., God and humankind at work; passion for relevance of the Scripture using critical-historical approach as a guide; life and ministries of the faith community as essential in transforming institutions and society, the present and future reality of God's kingdom. See Richard J. Coleman, Issues of Theological Conflict: Evangelicals and Liberals, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 49. Also see Martin Marty, Righteous Empire: The Protestant Experience in America (New York: Dial, 1970), chapter 6.

[33] Daniel Day Williams, God's Grace and Man's Hope (New York: Harper, 1949), 28.

criticized liberal theology for downplaying the reality of sin, particularly in its varied manifestations in self-pride. He acknowledges the neo-orthodox emphasis on the pervasiveness of sin and the need for redemption. In the liberal tradition, church school teaching tends to stress group experience and group dynamics, and discussions that allow people to participate and freely express their views. They fully affirm the self which, to many of them, is "the source of all religious meaning."[34] Relationships with others is enhanced by group experience, while at the same time fulfills the individual need for personal growth and satisfaction.

Further, Bellah's research shows that the theologically evangelical and conservative churches tend to stress obedience and loyalty to moral admonitions through such disciplines as church attendance, scripture study, and prayer. The "holy habits" seem to strengthen personal relatedness with God, but the connection seems limited in scope and dimension. Prayer, for instance, becomes an avenue for showing concern for others by petitioning God to help those who are not Christians to renounce evil pursuits and to join the "fold." Adherence to tradition and scripture limits their exercise of individual freedom.[35] Nancy Tatom Ammerman's research confirms the fundamentalist churches' focus on the knowledge of scripture, personal salvation, and "cure of souls." Mainline churches tend to neglect these important emphases.[36] Yet the mainline churches themselves have developed and strengthened ministries in response to the varied needs within the faith community and in the larger society, which the conservative,

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[34] Bellah, et al., 229.

[35] Ammerman, 195.

[36] Roof and McKinney, 86.

fundamentalist congregations have tended to downplay. Some needs include reaching out to persons of differing beliefs and values, discovering afresh the witness of the Scripture and emphasizing present reality as well as the future hope of the kingdom of God.[37] The mainline churches have allowed science and biblical higher criticism to play important roles in the hermeneutical process, while the fundamentalist churches have relied on the unquestioned authority of the scriptures for all of life. Pedagogical approaches in fundamentalist church schools focus largely on lectures and teachers' admonitions on ethical standards. Church school classes for all ages emphasize moralistic teaching, scripture memorization, and Bible-centered approach. Disconnectedness occurs as the method and content fail to reach the students.

One other aspect of the problem is that most churches lack the capability to help persons experience responsible caring. Further, they are not fully effective in helping persons to choose and foster healthy forms of relatedness. One finding in Bellah's research shows that both the theologically liberal and evangelical-conservative churches stress loving relationships, based upon their own concept of caring.[38] However, their caring is perceived as limited and conditioned by their church's ethos. They differ in their motivational direction. The conservatives tend to focus on the personal salvation of those being cared-for. They express caring with evangelistic zeal and urgency. They take seriously the mandate to evangelize within one's culture and to be in mission in the wider, varied cultures. They participate in social action to bring about spiritual regeneration. The liberals

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[37] Coleman, 49.

[38] Bellah, et al., 227-32.

provide care to help persons become "whole." Wholeness includes an increasing capacity to enhance the life of the faith community, their own inner self, the society, and their relationship with God. They tend to channel their acts of caring through service organizations and social action groups in the church.

In the theologically conservative church, relatedness with the scripture as authority leads to caring within the organized group of confessing Christians, but it creates ambiguity and uncertainty in terms of connecting with the world. Bellah notes that conservatives tend to express love primarily within their own faith community and fall short of becoming inclusive and global in their outreach and concern, except through their missionary projects to far-away lands.[39] He says that they seem to lack the capacity to face the reality of the world, a rainbow-colored world of persons with different lifestyles and values. The language of values becomes alive in their families, church and like-minded groups, but still fails to be fully applied with those who differ from the accepted norm, particularly those with different sexual orientation and lifestyle.

Bellah's observations and conclusions about fundamentalist churches concur with the findings of Nancy Tatom Ammerman. Ammerman's research reveals that these Bible-believing people perceive modernism as an enemy, and they stress separation from the world as a key tenet.[40] They nurture relationships largely with and through people of similar beliefs and values. Adherence to past traditions, the authority of the Scripture, and the legitimacy of pastors as earthly authority tends to limit their sphere of

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[39] Ibid., 232.

[40] Ammerman, 3.

relatedness. Personal experience and reason are used to reinforce the legitimacy and authority of the Scripture, and not to serve as primary norm for beliefs. Ammerman's research confirms the assumption that strict, literal adherence to biblical teachings impedes rather than frees the full manifestation of relatedness. The Gospels, however, emphasize the Scripture's liberating power of enabling people to express fully their relatedness in affirming ways. Jesus' saying, we "shall know the truth, and the truth shall make (us) free" suggests that internalizing and doing the truth as shown by Christ frees us from the bondage of human existence.

Members of both the liberal and the conservative traditions may be incognizant of the lopsided emphasis and narrow focus that each tends to place upon relatedness. Perhaps they do not recognize that every dimension is related to the other dimensions, and none can function effectively alone. Churches that adhere strongly to a particular theological view may emphasize prayer life as communion with God, but may prove weak in other dimensions of relatedness. To be authentic, a meaningful relationship with God through prayer should be manifested in life-affirming relationship with others. Healthy interrelatedness exists when we live out our prayer by acceptance and care of persons with different ideology, lifestyle, practice, and when interrelatedness is inclusive, motivated by honest concern, and guided by divine compassion. Similarly, growth of the self that results in responsible caring takes place not merely through connection with others but through a firm grounding and intimacy with God.

How does the church respond to the problem? Christian education, aided by process theology and psychology, gives us a clue as to how to deal with the problem of disconnectedness, and simultaneously face the issue of interrelatedness and responsible caring.

Relatedness and Caring

Confronting the problem of disconnectedness involves discerning healthy relatedness and responsible caring. The thrust of this section is to define and conceptualize on these value-laden words. This section will clarify the concepts in order to provide a clue to the church's response to disconnectedness and a conceptual tool for Christian education practice. Daniel Day Williams' concept of love will be foundational for our understanding of relatedness and caring. He has been chosen among the contemporary theologians because of his coherent, and systematic theological understanding of the Christian doctrine of love. Process philosophy has greatly influenced his theology, particularly his perspective on relatedness. Alfred North Whitehead's influence largely accounts for Williams' emphasis on the relatedness of entities, that is, the relatedness of God, persons, and world, and of past, present, and future reality. Williams' theology demonstrates a process view of the interrelatedness of all real things.[41]

Individuals and groups have used different words for relatedness. Words like connectedness, relationship, connection, integration, and community have been used synonymously with relatedness. The German words for relationship, _verwandschaft_ and _beziehung_, refer to kinship, affinity, and connection. The term relatedness comes from the root word relate, _relatus_ in Latin, past participle of _referre_, i.e., to carry back, refer, which means "to be borne or thrust in between things" or between interacting forces.[42] To be related, therefore, is to be connected, it is "the

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[41] Williams, _Essays in Process Theology_, 100, 119.

[42] "Relate," _Oxford English Dictionary_, 2nd ed.

condition of being related to something else. . . ," to be joined or linked together. Thus, we see the similarity of the terms. Two or more subjects unite, interact, and form a bonding.

Relatedness, like connectedness and connection, conveys a bond of "interdependence, causality, logical sequence, coherence or the like."[43] Relatedness imparts a strong message of interweaving and interacting. Relatedness is a process, more than a quality or condition -- a process of coming together. As a purposive process, it can bring either positive or negative results. In the Christian perspective, relatedness should affirm, enhance, and sustain life if it is positive and thus worth cultivating. Though relatedness always exists as an inevitable part of life, it is not always positive. Sometimes relationships are abusive or oppressive, and people experience brokenness. Despite this brokenness, however, caused by lack of love, a fundamental relatedness with the Creator and the creation continues to exist. Brokenness does not erase what God has connected from the beginning.

Psychological and Feminist Views

Although some theorists use the terms relatedness and relationship interchangeably, others perceive some nuances between the two terms. For example, Ann Belford Ulanov, a Jungian analyst and a professor of psychiatry and religion, asserts that relatedness is an unconscious drive that functions within and on a person, while relationship applies to a consciously developed relation with another that needs both distance and differentiation as well as

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[43] "Relatedness," Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary, 1982 ed.

closeness and sharing.[44] She implies that conscious attention to another person or group is important in a relationship. Physical proximity and moments of being together are necessary for developing relationship, but so is time apart. For her, this kind of human connection constitutes an intentionally recognized relationship. Relatedness, on the other hand, emerges without intentional effort to make it happen. Some Third World immigrants to the United States, for example, can feel a sense of relatedness to other economically and socially deprived persons due to their similarity in socio-economic background and hopes. Identification and similarities may lead to relatedness, but relatedness can also develop out of differences, opposites, and contraries. Relationships may develop out of this underlying relatedness as persons begin to relate more consciously.

Feminist thought has strongly emphasized the concept of relatedness or connection. Carol Gilligan has made the concept of relationship central in her theoretical formulations. She asserts that a context of human relationship defines women, and the ability to care responsibly establishes their morality.[45] Jean Baker Miller's _Toward a New Psychology of Women_ also stresses relatedness with others as the context in which women find, form, and sustain their identity.[46] Women tend to develop a sense of who they are as they live and work in relationship with others, not in solitary life. Women tend to want mutuality, while men tend to prefer contractual relationships. Both Gilligan and Miller postulate that the total development of

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[44] Ann Belford Ulanov, _The Feminine in Jungian Psychology and in Christian Theology_ (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971), 155.

[45] Gilligan, 17.

[46] Jean Baker Miller, 83.

men and women advances only by means of connection.[47] Feminist thought focuses on the value of interpersonal relatedness characterized by responsible caring, that is, relationships in which serious consideration is given to the well being of other persons and oneself.

Theological Views

Psychological and feminist descriptions of relatedness offer important perspectives for theology. Similarly, philosophical formulations of the meaning of relatedness are essential to understanding theological views. Process metaphysics postulates that the world is made up of interdependent and interrelated actual entities, i.e., complex "drops of experience" and "units of process."[48] Relatedness exists in all beings whether persons consciously recognize it or not. Alfred North Whitehead maintains that all beings and experience are inherently related.[49] Persons influence their world, and the world influences them. Also, past experiences affect present experiences, and present experiences influence future possibilities.

Based on Williams' thinking and influenced by Whitehead's view, life-affirming relatedness is a dynamic process that strengthens and renews relationships of people with their own inner self, with significant persons, a faith community, the divine Being, and the world. This relatedness enhances and sustains life and is rooted in divine love. Integrity and congruence in personal beliefs, values, behavior, and attitudes characterize this process. Caring becomes a visible manifestation of our relatedness with God and God's

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47 See Gilligan and Miller defend in their writings that relationship or connectedness is essential to the wholeness of both men and women.

48 Whitehead, Process and Reality, 27, 28. See also Sherburne, ed., A Key to Whitehead's Process and Reality, 205-6.

49 Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas, 197, 292.

creations. Caring is "a reenactment of or a response to our relationship to a caring God."[50] Caring emanates from an experience of God's creative and redemptive love. Persons express their inner relatedness through responsible caring. Caring becomes responsible as persons respond to their relationships with love that affirms, enhances, and sustains life. Negative and destructive entities and relationships demonstrate irresponsible and uncaring response to God's world. Responsible caring involves extending and risking oneself to another person or a community, both as a giver and a recipient of ministry.

God's interaction with the world and the world's interaction with God show a dynamic, interactive relationship. Because of God's gift of human freedom and creativity, we have enormous possibilities to use our potential for good or evil.[51] We have more power for self-determination, other-determination, and creativity than other beings, although all individuals and creation have creativity and determination, to some degree. Although we belong to God, we act as independent entities. Thus, we have more freedom to make choices, to create, to think, to feel, and to act. God influences whatever happens, but God does not determine what happens or how things happen or how persons act. God's power is not coercive or force; it is persuasive power characterized by unconditional love. It is part of God's nature not to control but to allow us and other living beings to do what seems best for us.

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[50] Robin Gill, Beyond Decline: A Challenge to the Churches (London: SCM, 1988), 61.

[51] David Ray Griffin, "Theological Perspectives," Class lecture notes of author, School of Theology at Claremont, Fall 1983. Griffin's lectures influenced my thinking on the problem of evil.

God's relevance to the world depends upon God's participation in its life, and the efficacy of entities depends upon the cooperation of the world with God. Williams stresses that God encounters every human relationship as the "supreme member" of society and as the "order and structure of possibility."[52] The world can work together with God in creating and bringing possibilities of good. The relatedness of eternal objects and possibilities reveals God's primordial nature, that is, God as the source of creative order.[53] Whitehead maintains, as Williams has pointed out, that God manifests the primordial nature by bringing order; and God reveals the consequent nature by making concrete the actualities and bringing novelty, thus transcending the world.[54] In both natures, God's love undergirds the creative and redemptive work as revealed in and through Jesus Christ Influenced by Whitehead's process view, Williams stresses human relatedness with the Creator-Redeemer God and with oneself, other persons, a community of faith, and the world.

Williams' claim regarding the social nature of persons is a key to his theological outlook on relatedness. He lays out the following requirements for a logical understanding of social relatedness.[55] First, all relationships involve both the freedom and the individuality of each person in the life of others. This means that individual response to the social environment influences greatly the dynamics and depth of relationship. Second, all

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[52] Ibid., 12, 19.

[53] Whitehead, Process and Reality , 48.

[54] See Sherburne, 225-7.

[55] Williams, Essays in Process Theology, 15-9.

actions and behavior involve being influenced and affected by others' actions. Mutuality characterizes social interaction. Individuals change in relation to interpersonal relationships. The social world critically affects persons' values, attitudes, behavior, and beliefs. Third, the logic of value judgments is defined in the context of social relatedness. Contextualizing in ethics is important because varying conditions will enhance social relatedness in one context, but impede the growth of relationship in another situation. What matters is the nurture of creativity and freedom and other values that bring meaning to life. Fourth, genuine social relationships must include the past, present and future. A continual search for and discovery of beauty and goodness must be motivated by past experience, enhanced by present actuality, and motivated by a goal for the future.

Williams' theology affirms the underlying assumption that relatedness is a given. The biblical views of creation and covenant undergird the concept of relatedness as a given. Human life is grounded in the God of creation, not in oneself. God's acts as revealed in the Old Testament and the New Testament manifest a covenant-initiating, covenant-keeping God.[56] Creation demonstrates that the foundation of the world rests on God. Creation shows that God needs human beings to work in partnership in continuing God's creation and redemption of humanity. The relationship between God and God's people constitutes a covenant with mutual promise and responsibility.

Walter Brueggemann points out that the metaphor of the covenant in broad terms is "relatedness to and grounding in Another."[57] He implies that the covenant reveals our identity as God's creation and partners in God's

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[56] See Brueggemann, "Covenanting as Human Vocation."

[57] Ibid., 118.

creative work. The covenant affirms strongly and pervasively that all of life depends upon the ever-present relatedness to God, the loving and faithful Creator, Redeemer and Lord.[58] In God's unconditional forgiving act and human faithful response, God's people become the covenant-practicing community.

Faithful trust and responsible freedom, not mistrust and control, characterize relatedness between God and God's people.[59] When human disloyalty and destructive control pervade, brokenness exists. In brokenness, God's people experience guilt and remorse. God, is personal, compassionate, and faithful; thus God identifies and suffers with the people. From brokenness to connectedness, the covenant relationship brings new possibilities for renewed partnership in creative and redemptive work with God.

Daniel Day Williams has emphasized the covenant theme in his exposition of the concept of the election of Israel as God's chosen people and of Jesus Christ as "God's Elect Man."[60] Both covenants, i.e., the old covenant with Israel and the new covenant established through Christ, the Messiah, disclose God's act of love to humankind. Through God's faithfulness with the Hebrew people and through God's revelation in the life, death and resurrection of Christ, God has initiated a binding covenantal relationship. Mutual giving and receiving between God and God's people characterize the relationship. A covenant of promise and expectation embodies God's compassionate spirit and faithfulness and the people's loyalty to the one God. This is the biblical

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[58] Ibid., 116.

[59] Ibid., 107.

[60] See Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love , 160-5.

concept.[61] Human relatedness to the One extends to relatedness to the other. Thus, trust in the covenant-initiating One extends to trusting the covenant-responding community. Loving God is inextricably connected to loving other persons, creating an interdependence.[62] Hence, our understanding of the covenant as community-oriented suggests that the relationship of God's people with the Creator-Redeemer shall translate into our life together as a community.

Williams maintains that love undergirds the covenant. His exposition of the history of love in the biblical tradition and his Christological views reveal that the constitutive nature of God is love. Love characterizes God's personal relationship with all human creatures; it is the foundation of the covenant between God and humanity. For Williams, love is the spirit that draws persons into communion with God and with all living beings and sets them free to participate creatively in God's creating and redeeming work.[63] Love manifests itself in reconciliation, joyful experiences, and a sense of security, and suffering on behalf of another. Covenantal life is lived in love.

Williams holds strongly the theological stance that love constitutes God's being and finds fullest expression in the life and ministry of Christ. A continuing communion with God strengthens the love relationship between God and humanity. Williams' conceptuality of the incarnation reveals the primacy of God's love, for it is the fulfillment of God's creative and redemptive love.[64] Human relatedness with God is given the renewed meaning of covenant relationship with the coming of the Incarnate Christ.

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[61] Ibid., 21.

[62] 1 John 4:20-21(RSV). Walter Brueggemann, "Covenant as Subversive Paradigm," Christian Century, 12 November 1980 : 1097.

[63] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love, 12-4.

Williams' concept of love, therefore, forms a theological framework for understanding relatedness and responsible caring. Williams claims that any form of human relatedness needs grounding in the divine love if it aims to enhance life and to ensure healthy growth. The multiple dimensions of relatedness become integrated when God's love firmly undergirds human loves and pervades all relationships. The divine love at the center of relatedness clears the way for life-affirming decisions and actions, at the same time, thwarting life-negating decisions and actions. God's creative love in Christ who motivates, sustains, and nurtures human relationships of love, freedom and creativity. God's love is the very foundation of all life-affirming relationships and ethical responsibilities.[65]

Love aims for communion in freedom with God and the other, Williams maintains.[66] The goal of love is strengthening life-affirming relatedness. The term "in freedom" suggests that in love, the divine-human relationship frees persons to demonstrate their nature, that is, the _imago Dei_. Love, therefore, is not command or law or principle, but spirit. Love is a dynamic spirit that brings contemporary relevance to the history of love, e.g., the love revealed in the covenant and election relationship. Williams points out that love is the spirit of communion characterized by "freedom of the other."[67] It continually seeks the good of others and brings out the best in them. Genuine

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64 Ibid., 155-72. For Williams, the conviction that love embodies God's being and human fulfillment in life illuminates the meaning of the incarnation.

65 Ibid., 14.

66 Ibid., 3.

67 Ibid., 161.

love, as God has exemplified in the incarnate Christ, integrates persons with themselves and with the world. The potent act of love builds and strengthens life-enhancing relatedness. Love by its nature evokes the human drive to interact with the world, to listen to inner motives and longings, and to reach out for the life-Source and traveling Companion.

God's love and human loves penetrate into and influence humanity and history.[68] To discern love as a powerful force is essential in understanding the concept of relatedness in its multiple dimensions. Love works actively and creatively in strengthening life-enriching relatedness and caring.

Life-affirming relatedness manifests divine love that allows the other to act freely, responsively, and with care. Williams emphasizes the creative working partnership between God and creation, with each one influencing the other in a dynamic interaction. Love's persuasive, not coercive, power can turn relationships from becoming disharmonious, hostile, and destructive. The lack of love, expressed in hatred and cruelty, results in divisiveness and alienation.

Separation of the various dimensions of relatedness occur when the conscious self relates in negative way with one's own inner being, with other persons, with God, and the natural world. Persons perceive and experience reality as too difficult, risky, and unbearable; thus disconnection becomes a safety outlet from danger and hurt. Separation is heightened when the social climate prevents the expression and blossoming of life-enhancing relatedness and caring. Carl Jung, Erik Erikson and Daniel Day Williams give helpful insights on the crisis of separation.

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[68] Ibid., 4.

Loving relationships include suffering. Williams strongly emphasizes that genuine love always involves suffering; to experience suffering is to experience strength in love.[69] Williams affirms the New Testament teachings that suffering, through Christ's death, has fully revealed God's authentic love and has transformed persons into new beings as lovers of God and of persons.

Both psychology and theology posit that relatedness involves a dynamic interplay between oneself and another individual, and requires sensitivity to respond to each other's needs for becoming human. Williams' theology of love, along with Carol Gilligan's concept of relationships and Nel Noddings understanding of responsible caring provide rich sources to help interpret and clarify the meaning of relatedness and care. They have made the point clearly in their writings that caring is grounded in human connection with one another and in the ensuing receptivity to existing human needs and situations.[70]

Relatedness undergirds caring. No meaningful relationship takes place without responsible caring, and no caring occurs without responsible relationship.[71] True caring nurtures relationships that lead to the full development of human potentialities. False caring impedes the growth of persons to express freely the imago Dei in their personal lives and in their

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[69] Williams refers to Rom. 5: 8 and I Cor. 5: 17 to point out that the suffering and death of Christ fully expresses the love of God. Human suffering manifests commitment to love.

[70] Noddings, 2. See also Gilligan, 62-3, 98, 125-6. Williams emphasizes that caring or love in action manifests human relatedness to the Creator-Redeemer and the imago Dei in persons. See Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls.

[71] Gilligan, 127, 149; Noddings, 85, 89; Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls , 17.

relationships. Williams goes further by pointing out that genuine caring expresses the human relatedness with God in Christ.

Care is also basic to forming an authentic self, i.e., the self that manifests consistency in personal beliefs, values, behavior, and attitudes. Robert Kegan, a psychologist, offers a metaphorical description of caring. He says that caring is "seeing" what it is that people do, think and value; and in the process, the persons "seen" become more important and valued.[72] Seeing beyond the surface involves getting into the shoes of the other person. When persons truly see, they find the goodness of others, the _imago Dei_ in the other. A group of young people conducted Bible study with prison inmates. They sang, prayed with the group, listened, and talked individually with some inmates. The youth were moved by the attentive and kind response of the inmates, particularly those convicted of murder. Seeing enables individuals to affirm the gifts of others, even if they have committed the worst crime, and to help them grow in areas where disconnectedness and brokenness exist.

In the process of caring, persons involve themselves in an inner-motivated, other-directed undertaking of relating with the other, and of giving and receiving. To be other-directed in this context is to be motivated from within to attend to the other without expecting care in return. Other-direction arises from inner-direction to care, and inner-motivation urges us to be other-directed. Also, the self and other are both seen as important and related. As we care for ourselves, we take care of the other and the world. As we take care of others and the world, we provide care for ourselves. A

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72 Robert Kegan, _The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development_ (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 16.

Bread for the World member once said that he takes care of himself by upholding his values and by working toward saving hundreds of malnourished children through his voice, pen, and funds. This person sends his financial support and writes or calls senators and representatives whenever bills related to hunger are before the Congress.

The language of other-directedness recalls the work of David Riesman comparing inner-directed and other-directed personalities, primarily from a sociological standpoint. Riesman's analysis of the American social character reveals that Americans, particularly the middle class, moved towards inner-direction in the nineteenth century and started moving towards other-direction in the twentieth century and have stayed in that cultural, psychological mode.[73] He says that inner-directed persons are guided and challenged by the ethos set early in their life by significant persons, such as parents and other elders.[74] Their motivation to achieve and to grow comes from internalized goals to live productively. The description of the inner-directed person concurs with our perception in terms of the importance of the internalized past tradition and story. Riesman's positive descriptions of the other-directed person (as tolerant, sensitive, considerate, and ready to

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[73] See David Riesman, The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character, abridged ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962). The "old" middle class are the bankers, engineers, small entrepreneur, while the "new" middle class who live mainly in the larger cities and are found among the young are the organization people, the bureaucrats, business employees, says Riesman. The upper middle class are considered leaning towards other-directed. He describes the inner-directed as more concerned with production and expansion, more in control of self and the given environment, while other-directed is more concerned with consumption and depends more on others for decisions. Ibid., 20, xxvi-xxvii.

[74] Ibid., 8, 14-5.

change) are overshadowed by his critical analysis of that social type.[75] Unlike the inner-directed person who relies primarily on internal charting, the other-directed person, in Riesman's thinking, depends heavily upon the approval of others and the larger society.

From the perspective of Daniel Day Williams, the nature of other-directedness discussed here is very different; it emerges from a deep sense of life-enhancing relatedness and a faithful response to the covenantal relationship with God. Those who genuinely care respond sensitively and deliberately to the thoughts and feelings of the other, rather than allow their own feelings and thoughts to dominate the other.[76] A spirit of "otherness" is a fundamental quality that is embodied in responsible caring. As the writer of The Cloud of Unknowing says, the soul has "this sense of 'otherness' to which it turns to its home and without which it finds life unsupportable."[77]

To care, therefore, is to be other-directed and inner-motivated to be care-givers. To care is to commit ourselves to responding to specific needs of the other person. Relationships of caring always involve commitment – commitment to receive the other. Noddings claims that caring involves the "commitment to act in behalf of the cared-for," a continued interest in the other person's reality throughout the appropriate time span, and the continual renewal of commitment over this period of time.[78] To commit

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[75] Ibid., xx, xvii. Riesman contends that the other-directed wants to seek approval and hence does things out of the need to be liked. Relationship tends to be shallow and superficial, he says. Ibid., 22, 25, 159.

[76] Noddings, 83.

[77] Clifton Wolters, trans., The Cloud of Unknowing and Other Works, ed. Betty Radice (New York: Penguin, 1978), 47.

[78] Noddings, 16.

ourselves to caring is to respond to persons, groups, and institutions at their point of need. Commitment means taking responsibility to care for the other and accepting the demands on time and patience. This requires listening, even when listening cannot be in a face-to-face dialogue. Those who care responsibly listen to the voice of the oppressed, even from several thousand miles distance. A commitment to caring also involves an honest affirmation of the sacredness of life and the worth of individual human beings, a continuous striving for whatever brings beauty, harmony, joy, and other values that give meaning to human existence.

One caution in this discussion is to avoid identifying caring as constitutive of one psychological function or personality type. For example, some extroverted persons tend to project a very visible caring spirit. The introverts may not show their caring so openly, but they may care deeply. We need to uphold the strengths of various personality types and accept the reality of the multiplicity of characteristics within each of us. Carl Jung has given us insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the various psychological characteristic functions.[79]

Gilligan emphasizes that a principle of interdependence underlies responsible caring.[80] We are social beings, and we discover our identity only in relationship with others. Interdependence differs from dependence; in the latter, one tends to be superior to the other. In interdependent relationships, the care-giver feels rewarded as much as the cared-for person, and the care-giver is willing, also, to receive and to be the one cared-for. Those who truly

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[79] See Carl G. Jung, _The Portable Jung_, ed. Joseph Campbell.,trans. R.F.C. Hull (New York: Penguin 1976). Also, see Carl Jung, _Psychological Types_, trans. H.G. Baynes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).

[80] Gilligan, 74.

care do not expect to be cared for in return, and they do not need always to be giving; they can also receive. Numerous examples of caring people worldwide have demonstrated compassion and justice by helping people meet their basic needs of physical survival and gain self-esteem and self-respect.

Interdependence is also different from co-dependence. In interdependence, caring enhances the lives of the care-giver and the cared-for. In co-dependence, the one who receives help (like the addict) and the helper (the co-dependent) restrain the development of each other's potentials. Anne Wilson Schaef asserts that co-dependence is a "disease" in the "addictive process" that needs to be confronted and treated seriously.[81] Schaef identifies caretaking as one of the characteristics of co-dependents.[82] She perceives that caretaking is rooted in low self-esteem, "external referenting," and dependence on others. For her, caretaking encourages the addicted person to continue being dependent and encourages the co-dependent to continue being unhelpful. In her perspective, the helper role of taking care of other people is more destructive than helpful. Caretaking for others arises out of a personal need to increase self-esteem and a desire to please others and feel needed.[83]

In the perspective based on Williams' concept of love, caregiving emerges from a personal response to the love of God rather than from personal neediness. An act of faith and a sense of gratitude to the Creator-Redeemer constitute the response. For persons to manifest the imago Dei

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[81] See Anne Wilson Schaef, Co-Dependence: Misunderstood-Mistreated (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986).

[82] Ibid, 52-4.

[83] Ibid., 52.

entails the task of caregiving. Responsible care can be expressed in its honest form through a serious commitment to justice and compassion for the oppressed. Noddings perceives the emergence of caring for the self as a result of caring for others.[84] For Noddings, Williams, and religious educators Randolph Miller and Lewis Sherrill, interpersonal relatedness enhances intrapersonal connectedness.[85] As persons reach out in compassion and care for others, they fulfill an innate need and an ethical call to relate responsibly and humanely. The caring response shapes their selfhood, e.g., beliefs, values, sense of integrity, and purpose. As Williams asserts, free and creative persons live interdependently with others while maintaining their own sense of "individuality and integrity."[86]

Authentic caring embodies the following characteristics:

1. True caring extends to persons of all races, socio-economic status, ideological leanings, lifestyles, and values.

2. Because of the demanding task of caring, many caring persons may use the "in absentia" form of ministry through prayer, phone calls, letter writing, or sending material resources.

3. Caring requires the commitment of time and energy, material resources, and capabilities, such as advocating for the causes of the cared-for.

4. The spirit of responsible caring characterizes a response of love to the divine-initiated love.

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[84] Noddings, 14.

[85] See Sherrill, The Gift of Power, 68-82. Also Randolph C. Miller, Christian Nurture and the Church , 33-4, 44.

[86] Williams, God's Grace and Man's Hope , 124.

5. A beginning step to authentic caring is to recognize and accept persons as God's creation who are formed in the *imago Dei*, capable and in need of love. Acceptance of other humans involves a positive view of ourselves, of God, and others. Further, it entails an overcoming of inner fears, perhaps the fears of rejection, criticism, disappointment, and responsibility.

6. Because of the multiplicity of our inner selves, which is characterized by polarities, strengths, and weaknesses in our personalities, caregivers have their high and low moments in responding to persons in need. We reach high, low, and plateau levels of caring response to persons and situations. Sometimes our outwardly visible response can be construed as uncaring. Within a realistic time frame, they need to decide how best they can live out their caring.

7. Caring can best be nurtured within a loving faith community. Participation in the life of a dynamic faith community is very important to the cultivation of care. The church can provide significant images, language, and occasions in which we can come face to face with our fears that prevent us from caring relationships. This does not discount caring people who do not participate in a faith community. They may receive nurture from support groups other than the faith community.

Noddings, Williams, and Kegan recognize the risky venture of caring. As Kegan says, caring involves risk but doing it maintains the relatedness between us, for we enrich the life we share, or "the life that shares us."[87] Caring maintains our connections to one another. We enrich another life through caring. For Williams, caring brings us into healing, reconciling

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[87] Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, 20.

ministry to and in the world.[88] Caring is ministry, and Christian caring is Christian ministry. The purpose of caring, like other forms of Christian ministries, is to help meet a need, and in meeting a need, to bring healing and reconciliation to persons. The Latin word cura means care or cure. To care is to provide cure or healing of an ailment, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual. Williams discovers that in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, the language of salvation and the language of healing are interwoven.[89] He says that like pastoral care, all Christian caring is service to persons in the spirit of Christ.[90] This spirit of the ministry of Christ exemplifies servant ministry. The paradigm of servanthood that Christ exemplified calls persons to responsible caring.

The Christological foundation of the faith illumines the concept of caring. Christians maintain that Christ has fully revealed God's mercy and compassion to humanity and has manifested a life of love. The spirit of Christ continues to show to humanity how to love, and the same Spirit strengthens persons in love in the midst of unloveliness, disorder, disunity, and ugliness.

Relatedness to God brings the promise and the fulfillment of God's love as well as the responsibility to love our neighbor.[91] To follow seriously the demands of the covenant entails a moral responsibility to love the other. The relatedness of the creature to the Creator demands consistency in

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[88] See Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love, 243-75.

[89] Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls , 5.

[90] Ibid., 43.

[91] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love, 23. Neighbors refer to those in our midst within our community and those in the global community, which extends to the rest of the world.

relationship, in which love for God means love for neighbor, too. Thus, relatedness is triadic, not dyadic; for human relationship extends to the One and the other. Here and in other writings, Williams says pointedly that love for the neighbor manifests the imago Dei in persons and obedience to God.

The ethical responsibility of human beings to love, as embodied in the covenant, evokes a paradigm of a mature faith response, that is, a response to nurture life-enhancing relatedness and responsible caring. Brueggemann calls such a paradigm subversive due to the radical nature of love, for love demands unconditional justice and disregards the status quo.[92]

Mature caring, therefore, is a moral responsibility attached to human interrelatedness. To care is an ethical issue. Every time persons express responsible caring, they respond positively to the other; they enable others to participate in healthy relatedness. To manifest healthy forms of caring enhances personal relatedness with others, with God, with a faith community, and with the world.

In summary, a clue to solving the problem of disconnectedness comes from the concepts of relatedness and caring in the theological perspective of Daniel Day Williams, amplified by insights from feminists theorists and psychologists Carol Gilligan, Nel Noddings, and Ann Wilson Schaef. The next three chapters will examine Williams' understanding of the dimensions of relatedness with specific focus on self-knowledge (intrapersonal relatedness), responsible love (interpersonal relatedness) and community of faith (communal relatedness).

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92 See Brueggemann, "Covenanting as Human Vocation," 116-8.

CHAPTER 3

Intrapersonal Relatedness: Daniel Day Williams' View of Self-Understanding and Carl Jung's Perspective

Self-understanding is a sound base for the discovery and strengthening of human relatedness. Genuine knowledge _of_ the self, not _about_ the self, ultimately leads to the knowledge of God, others, and the world.[1] To be able to live in harmony with the Creator, with other created beings, and with the world, self-knowledge is an imperative. Daniel Day Williams' analysis of self-knowledge underscores the primary importance of discerning one's own soul. Although he has directed his writings on self-knowledge primarily to ordained ministers in _The Minister and the Care of Souls_, his thoughts give new and fresh Christian perspective to persons who provide care to others. Williams acknowledges the contribution of psychology, particularly Carl Jung's analysis of the psyche, i.e., the conscious and the unconscious in all individuals.[2] Indeed, psychological insights enrich theological and educational understanding.

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[1] Lewis J. Sherrill has emphasized the knowledge of the self rather than about the self. See Roy W. Fairchild, "The Contribution of Lewis J. Sherrill to Christian Education," _Religious Education_ 53, no. 5 (Sept. - Oct.1958) : 410.

[2] Williams, _The Minister and the Care of Souls_ , 55-6, 75-6, 108.

Williams has clearly shown that a concept of self requires both psychological and theological perspectives.[3] Understanding oneself in relation to God, to one's inner being, to others and to the world is essential in fostering relatedness. Psychology has given new insights into personal and social relationships. Theology expresses the transcendent meaning in relationships as it responds to the deepest questions of human existence and the role of grace and faith. Psychology and theology deal with similar human conditions and predicaments, but use different language and symbols. For example, psychology uses the word acceptance; theology traditionally uses grace and forgiveness.[4]

Psychology helps unravel the connection between past and present experiences and the interrelatedness of motives and behavior. These interrelations are described by Williams as the "principle of linkage", that is, the principle that persons as God's creatures encounter varied experiences that are connected to every other experience.[5] For example, physical illness affects the person's emotional and mental well-being; it can strengthen or weaken the person's spiritual condition. Symbols express the relationship among experiences and show the primary modes in which human experiences are related.

The Christian concern for healing also calls for psychology and theology to work together in illuminating the self. Self-understanding leads to personal growth. Williams, for example, points out that self-knowledge constitutes an awareness and acceptance of one's innermost desires,

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[3] Ibid., 97.

[4] Ibid., 77.

[5] Ibid., 26-8.

anxieties, and hopes.[6] Psychology is helpful here in defining the elements of the conscious and unconscious self. Theology offers reflections on the inner self usually described as the human soul or spirit. In this chapter we will use the terms interchangeably.

For Williams, self-knowledge includes but transcends cognitive understanding.[7] The intellectual exercise needs the emotional response. Courage to search deeply into one's past and honestly confess one's personal weaknesses and sin far exceed cognitive understanding. Carl G. Jung also advocates this concept. Among all the depth psychologists who expound the significance of uncovering the mysteries of the psyche, Carl Jung has provided the most profound and comprehensive insights on the inner human world, its dynamics and religious value. He suggests that the conscious confrontation and acceptance of the unconscious part of life is a vital approach to self-understanding.[8] He points out that the path to wholeness, or to life-enhancing relatedness, involves heightening individual consciousness, bringing to light personal strengths and weaknesses, coming to terms with one's unconscious and reconciling the opposing traits within the self. These two figures, Williams and Jung, are the focus of this chapter.

Jung's Individuation Theory: An Overview

Jung's analysis of the individuation process unravels the inner world of human beings, that is, the dynamics of the unconscious and the therapeutic exploration of it. His theory of individuation refers to a life-long process of recognizing and accepting the multiple selves within us, e.g., different

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[6] Ibid., 96.

[7] Ibid., 96.

[8] See Jung, The Portable Jung, 121-62, 273-300.

potentialities, limitations, attitudes, and functions.[9] Individuation is a dynamic movement of developing one's potentialities while working towards increased acceptance of the unconscious self. Jung defines individuation as "identification with the totality of the personality."[10] The process focuses on moving continuously toward greater awareness and acceptance of one's uniqueness and limitations. Persons make the conscious effort to come to terms with their unconscious forces. A paradoxical reality is that to develop an integrated personality, individuals must be able to differentiate between their conscious selves and their unconscious inner impulses, drives, and needs, and avoid the controlling tendencies of the archetypal images that may deprive them of their identity. The process clarifies the purpose behind their cognitive and affective responses. They also become aware of their projection. According to Jung, to move toward individuation requires a separation of the conscious self, (the subject) from the outside forces, ideas, and other persons (the object). In this dynamic process, the self and not someone or something outside the person shapes the person's happiness and satisfaction.[11] Self-understanding that results in life-enhancing relatedness depends not only on recognizing the unconscious, but also in linking the conscious with the unconscious. To be genuinely ourselves constitutes the capacity to accept our conscious being as unique, different from other persons.

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[9] Carl G. Jung, Analytical Psychology: Its Theory and Practice (New York : Random House, 1968), 138.

[10] Ibid., 138.

[11] Ibid., 186.

To appreciate Jung requires looking into his method of understanding inner life. He is a psychologist, not a theologian. A Jungian theorist once said that the theological underpinnings of Jung's psychology are basically limited and at times flawed, but his method of distinguishing the self from unconscious forces makes persons more sensitive to the unconscious pulls working on them and thus gives them greater self-awareness and a certain degree of freedom from those irrationalities.[12] Persons who have gone through the process of sensitizing themselves to the unconscious often speak of becoming less judgmental and more accepting of themselves and others.

A crucial part of the individuation process is a recognition of the shadow aspects that we all have. Jung describes the shadow as that part of the "personal and collective psyche which contradicts our conscious attitude and disposition."[13] Because we find it incongruous and inharmonious with our preferred conscious behavior, and therefore, it does not fit into the conscious mold, we try to prevent its appearance. The shadow appears, however, in our conscious life in various forms, particularly in dreams and in projections onto others. We normally describe the shadow as negative and inferior because we do not like its contents. It constitutes the weak or less developed qualities that we repress and reject in our conscious life. The shadow does not always stand for the bad side in us. Sometimes the contents are positive, e.g., qualities we do not need or cannot use. Jung says that the

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[12] Demaris Wehr, "Religious and Social Dimensions of Jung's Concept of the Archetype: A Feminist Perspective,"_Feminist Archetypal Theory: Interdisciplinary Re-visions of Jungian Thought_, eds. Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupprecht (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 32. See Demaris S. Wehr, _Jung and Feminism: Liberating Archetypes_. Boston: Beacon, 1987.

[13] Carl G. Jung, _Memories, Dreams, Reflections_, ed. Aniela Jaffe, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Random House, 1965), 398.

shadow should not be treated equally as sin or evil. This is one side of the personality, and it happens to be the dark side, which we do not expose to conscious reality.

The danger arises when we deny the shadow. When we react intensely towards another person, such as becoming furious about a minor problem or angry toward someone who has not really harmed us, we are projecting our shadow on this person. We become possessed by the shadow when we constantly feel and act irrationally. The persons we dislike usually project an inferior trait in us. Our task is to integrate the shadow with our ego, the center of consciousness, by dialoguing and accepting our shadow. An amazing outcome is an understanding of ourselves and others.

Self-understanding can lead to the release of negative and destructive emotions, which individuals carry inside themselves like heavy baggage weighing them down, or like explosives ready to explode. People who have suffered emotional disturbances and later become emotionally healthy give credit to the healing process of self-discovery and a growing sense of accepting reality as it is, both good and evil.

Once people free themselves from the emotional baggage they carry and realize the power from within and from the divine to transform and be transformed by their world, they grow in becoming participants in God's creative work. Being related with a faith community can provide experiences for self-discovery. When persons recognize and accept their religious roots and destiny, they may become more honest with themselves, with others, and with God.

Jung confesses in his autobiography that the way to wholeness and the reality of the Self comes in self-giving love.[14] Williams makes a similar claim about the essential place of love in cultivating life-enhancing relationships.

Three Dimensions of Self-Understanding

Williams points out that a Christian perspective of self-understanding embodies three dimensions.[15] He analyzes the religious, personal, and vocational dimensions of the self.

Religious

When persons ask who am I or what is the meaning of life, they raise religious questions about their origin and destiny. Williams says that in the Christian perspective, persons form and discover their identity in response to and in cooperation with God in Christ and the world.[16] Identity and relationships are intertwined. Persons feel a sense of relatedness as they recognize and accept the image-of-God in their being, and find a faith community that becomes a context for strengthening interrelatedness and caring. Persons find their identity through God's action in the historical Jesus and the risen Christ.[17] A faith community helps them to discern their

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[14] Cited in Morton T. Kelsey, Prophetic Ministry: The Psychology and Spirituality of Pastoral Care (New York: Crossroad, 1984), 25. Jung acknowledges that obedience to God, which means loving God and persons, has brought love and meaning to his life. See Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections, 40.

[15] Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls, 96-103.

[16] Williams, Essays in Process Theology, 32.

[17] Ibid., 122.

Christian identity and traditions. An understanding of God's activities in creation and in history is important in discerning individual identity.[18]

Williams' theological formulation of identity is informed by Erikson's psychosocial definition of identity. He also accepts the indispensable place of identity in human life structure.[19] Erikson says that "within historical actuality it (identity) is the sum of all images, ideas, and forces which make a person (and a people) feel more like themselves and act more like themselves."[20] Erikson's thinking that identity is within historical actuality comes close to the biblical perspective of the historical foundation of identity. For Erikson, persons discover their identity in the context of their relationship with family and society. For Williams, identity goes beyond the primary group relationship; the primary locus of identity is in the persons' relationship with the historical Person, Jesus Christ.[21] Identity is rooted in God's saving act in human life and history through Christ's life, death, and resurrection.

Persons enhance their Christian identity as they accept God as Creator-Redeemer, the freedom and responsibility of all creatures and the world, and the capacity of persons to shape and reshape their lives within the givenness. Accepting these givens and taking responsibility to participate in God's

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[18] Ibid., 120.

[19] Ibid., 118.

[20] Ibid., 118. Erik Erikson, Insight and Responsibility (New York: Norton, 1964), 203-4. To explore Erikson's view of identity and other developmental tasks, see Erikson, Childhood and Society, 247-74, 275-426.

[21] Williams, Essays in Process Theology, 123. Williams examines his perspective of identity in his writing, "A Theological View of Identity." See Williams, Essays in Process Theology, 118-32.

creation and reconciliation invoke self-understanding, according to Williams.[22]

Resistance to the gifts of life, to responsibility, and to creativity thwarts the cultivation of life-affirming relationships. Fear to shape and be shaped by the world pushes people to reject the possibilities of good. It is the response of people who see only the possibility of evil, or who depend only on themselves and their own goodness.

Williams holds a Christological view of relationships. To understand the self means to become aware of the reality that stands between persons, the Holy Spirit, Christ in our midst, whom God has made personal and available to all.[23] Christ's Spirit, standing in the midst of interacting persons, effects change. Persons discover themselves and the spirit of Christ. Williams maintains that human relationships are always triadic, never dyadic.[24] Every relationship between individuals includes the Unseen Presence, the divine connection standing between persons, in communion with one another.

From the biblical perspective, to know the self means to know both our actual self, as we are, and our ideal self. We are forgiven sinners. Hence, knowledge of the self is juxtaposed with knowledge of spirit, says Williams.[25] The coming of the divine spirit in persons' lives renews the human spirit. As persons discover themselves, they discover God; and as they

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[22] Ibid., 129.

[23] See Williams, _The Minister and the Care of Souls_ , 66-70.

[24] Ibid., 66. James Fowler has strongly emphasized the triadic relationship in human faith development. See James W. Fowler, _Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning_ (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981), 16-23.

[25] Ibid., 124.

discover God, they discern and strengthen the" responsible, creative being "in themselves.[26] Williams affirms the Old Testament concept that persons are the"living, responsible, personal creation of the Creator, and thus are spirit.[27]

Genuine understanding of self leads to an understanding of God, others, and the world; it breaks through "the cloud of unknowing" which separates humanity from God. The anonymous author of The Cloud of Unknowing suggests that the power of understanding comes from the practice of contemplation.[28] The method involves the exercise of reading, reflecting, and praying.[29] The author points out that any helpful reflection entails previous reading, and any meaningful prayer consists of previous reflection and action on the Christian faith.

Williams supports the essential place of prayer in cultivating self-understanding.[30] For Williams, prayer is indispensable to nurturing multi-dimensional relatedness. In prayer, he says, the soul meets the Creator-Redeemer in "reverence, gratitude, . . . ruthless honesty, and self-disclosure."[31] He implies that to open oneself to God means that God can be trusted and that help can come from God. The act of prayer connotes a sense of dependence on God. Further, prayer involves self-examination and self-

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[26] Ibid., 125.

[27] Ibid., 123.

[28] See Wolters, 27, 61-6.

[29] Ibid., 21.

[30] Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls, 115-7.

[31] Ibid., 116.

renewal of one's loyalties and values and an engagement with God's claims.[32] In prayer, persons gratefully acknowledge the loving, faithful nature of God, thus allowing the sense of awe and gratefulness to arise from within Williams emphasizes that to make prayer genuine, persons need to be honest about their innermost desires and guilt, and be willing to hear God's call for repentance and change.[33] Persons may have the most honest motive and yet find themselves caught in situations muddled with chaotic, demonic pulls. We must also remember that honest intentions may be tainted with selfish motives and self-advancement. Hence, William says that self-knowledge is never completed. Nor is the human confession of evil ever complete, for persons continually discover themselves.

Like Jung, Williams underscores the necessity of coming to grips with the psyche in order to achieve self-knowledge. Rather than confront their own fears and prejudices, persons are quick to judge other persons. A fitting illustration comes from the play, The Lady's Not For Burning, by a widely acclaimed British playwright Christopher Fry.[34] Several characters in the play have done more assessment of others' speech and behavior rather than make assessment of their own past. In the play, a displaced soldier loudly confesses his sin and outrageously voices his discontentment towards society. He asks the town mayor, "And what goes round in your head, what . . . . little murders and fornication are afraid to come out?"[35] The other cast

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[32] Ibid., 166.

[33] Ibid., 116.

[34] See Christopher Fry, The Lady's Not For Burning (London: Oxford University Press, 1968).

[35] Ibid., 280.

members, who are respectable members of society, hear the soldier accept his guilt and speak against hypocrisy, but cannot confront themselves, their past and present existence. They seem fearful to look inside themselves. They believe the crowd rather than the truth. The accused, Jennet, the Lady, replies to the accusation, "Here is such a storm of superstition and humbug and curious passions. Where will you start to look for the truth?"[36] Perhaps Jennet represents the prophetic voices in churches and society that summon us to grasp the truth.

Without courage and confession, people continue to live in nonchalance about who they are. An encounter with the Holy brings consciousness of one's identity as being created in the imago Dei. Many revered saints of the church, e.g., Julian of Norwich and Augustine of Hippo, testify to the mystic and holy presence of God. They discover their identity and vocation in the life-transforming Presence. The awesome, humbling encounter with the divine evokes a confessional response and inner cleansing of the heart. Jung says that persons need to accept guilt as an incentive to self-knowledge.[37] Remorse and grief may be so unbearable and excruciatingly painful that persons are forced to examine themselves and discover the repressed, hidden self. When persons exercise their God-given freedom in unloving or selfish ways and realize the harm and hurt they create within themselves and with others, they usually experience guilt.

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[36] Ibid., 34.

[37] Hans Shaer, "Jung's Significance in the Religious Situation of Today," Religion and the Cure of Souls in Jung's Psychology , trans. R.F.Hull (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1951) , 219.

For Williams, an awareness of guilt evokes a need for forgiveness.[38] A sense of brokenness in the love-relationship with the divine and a desire for reconnection compels persons to come with repentant spirit and to seek divine grace. Acceptance and confession of guilt and sin arise from knowing the self and knowing the One who alone forgives us from sin.

Life-affirming relatedness between God and persons anchors human existence and undergirds responsible caring. When a heightened awareness of relatedness exists, caring becomes genuine, rather than superficial and contrived. Self-understanding that results in responsible caring leads to wholeness, to life-enhancing relatedness.[39] The joy and satisfaction of the Christian lies on the faith journey towards wholeness through participation with God rather than in wholeness itself.

Williams maintains further that self-understanding calls for persons to set priorities and choose "ultimate loyalties."[40] In finding who they are, persons face piercing questions, such as what is most important in life or to whom do I give my utmost trust and faithfulness. To avoid these religious questions and simply deal with psychological analysis will leave a superficial, inadequate selfhood. The Christian faith calls for centering personal trust in Christ whose grace has redeemed and healed humanity.

Williams affirms John Calvin's belief that knowing the inner self is ultimately knowing its meaning, and this is an essential part of God's purposes for creation.[41] Life's meaning rests on a dynamic personal

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[38] Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls, 22.

[39] Ibid., 100.

[40] Ibid., 96.

[41] Ibid., 98.

relationship with Christ. The knowing of God in Christ, for Williams, is knowing life's meaning, and this knowing leads to self-understanding.

Personal

Williams explores the personal dimension of self-knowledge, that is, the uniqueness of every person in being an individual at the center of experience in relationship with others.[42] He concurs with Alfred North Whitehead's view that persons are in the dynamic process of becoming through present moments of new thoughts, feelings and actions. Each is related to the past, to the social milieu, and each has an element of novelty based on the individual's inner life perspectives.[43] Further, persons look with hope toward the future as they shape and are reshaped by their community and the larger society.

Williams firmly maintains that human beings are free and creative to act and be acted upon. Self-determination and creativity motivate persons to respond to every present moment in dynamic ways. Nothing in God's creation ever stays static. Persons are free to transform their being and their world and to be transformed by forces within and around them.[44] However, with freedom comes limits and responsibilities. Both Williams and Jung agree that the use of freedom can bring either new life and love or destruction and hatred.

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[42] Ibid., 98.

[43] Ibid., 98-9.

[44] Williams, Essays in Process Theology , 13. Williams, God's Grace and Man's Hope , 182.

Williams' basic thesis about humanity is that persons are created to be in dynamic relationship with God.[45] The relationship is based upon a covenant rooted in the early Hebrew faith that continues in the present life of the community of faith. Williams describes the relationship as one of love, initiated by God and fully manifested in the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Christ. The key to his interpretation of human life, particularly on being created in the imago Dei, is love, that is, "that expression of spirit which has communion in freedom as its goal."[46] He views love as the context of the relationship between God and human beings, which is characterized by God-given human freedom and creativity. His writings, especially The Spirit and the Forms of Love, stress the ongoing experience of communion with oneself in love and freedom with God and with other human beings. In this last major work, he affirms the triadic relationship, the vital presence and act of love, and freedom in these relationships.

Self-knowledge makes persons realize that they are creatures of the One Who created and continues to create all of life, and that persons live for a purpose. Self-discovery comes with the recognition of the imago Dei in persons. The incarnate Christ transforms and reforms persons. Thus, Christian identity rests on understanding the self as created in the image of God and the image of Christ.[47]

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[45] Daniel Day Williams, "The Prophetic Dimension," The Uniqueness of Man : A Discussion at the Nobel Conference, ed. John D. Roslansky (London: North Holland, 1968), 141.

[46] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love , 3.

[47] Williams, Essays in Process Theology , 127.

Persons manifest the imago Dei through responsible caring. To respond to a felt experience of love for God, who in Christ has shown love to all humanity, is an act of faith. Thus, only through faith can Christians care genuinely and responsively. Through Christ, humanity finds God's purpose of creating a community of persons, i.e., a communion in love. As persons reflect the image of God, they actually enter more fully into the dynamics of interrelatedness. Genuine prayer life and caring ministry stretches the inner self to God, to others, and the world.

Vocational

Williams contends that vocation paves the way to self-knowledge.[48] Persons come to understand themselves as they discover their present task and future responsibilities. Williams says that persons find someone else -- a stranger, friend, family, enemy -- only as they respond to their vocation.[49] Ministry begins with discovering particular persons and being sensitive to persons' needs. Williams further says that vocation calls persons to express commitment to a higher calling; it is "a life dedicated, and a responsibility assumed."[50]

Servanthood characterizes vocation because response to vocation constitutes ministry to the neighbor. Thus, to fulfill one's vocation means to serve others in response to commitment to the covenant relationship with God. Williams says that discovery of one's vocation reveals the true nature of persons.[51] The social nature of persons, coupled with their imago Dei nature

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[48] Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls, 102-3.

[49] Ibid., 102.

[50] Ibid., 102, 103.

[51] Ibid., 103.

shapes vocational choice and the task of servanthood. The practice of one's vocation clearly manifests the relatedness of persons with other persons, God, a faith community, and the world .

Williams emphasizes that true self-understanding can guide persons in fulfilling servant ministry and can facilitate God's work of love; thus, it is essential to the Christian life.[52] He stresses that with limited self-knowledge, persons hinder the ministry of service to God in Christ and His church. Christian theology often claims that servanthood is a Christian mode of living, while psychology emphasizes productivity and self-affirmation as a focal point of life. Williams says that perhaps the real issue of the contemporary world is how persons can genuinely understand themselves and how they can confront their problems.[53] For instance, personal peace is related to the prevention of international war. One's well-being influences the health of society, for socially adjusted individuals create a healthy society.

Persons discover themselves as they become aware of the global village, the world where events and people enter our homes through the media and connect us to the human race. While global awareness can enhance individual awareness and identity, dynamic interaction with a local community gives insights into oneself, and give opportunity for the self to share values with the community. Self-examination and intimate associations with primary and secondary groups, continue to provide the necessary tools for the searching, inquiring self. Being vital part of the world

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[52] Ibid., 12.

[53] Williams says that the social relatedness of persons account for both the individual and collective nature of human problems. See Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls , 52-3.

which is indispensable to history, we cannot evade our connectedness. The view that our essential place in history and God's active role in it discloses our interrelatedness runs throughout Williams' thinking. Thus, self-understanding leads persons to connect with other human beings locally and globally in search of socio-economic justice and freedom.

The unifying vocation demands servanthood, suffering, redeeming, creating, and healing decisions and actions.[54]   In this sense, vocation involves caring. Caring is a form of servanthood ministry. Responsible caring involves sacrifice and suffering. As persons give themselves on behalf of another, and as they carry the cross of another, they go the second mile; and this in itself is a sacrificial act. Christian caring is a decision to participate in Christ's healing, reconciliation, and redemption. In caring, persons decide to put into action the meaning of service and being Christ to each other.

Suffering may help persons to understand themselves.[55] Persons may define their priorities when they respond to the suffering within themselves and in the world. Their response to those in need also opens up possibilities for the self; both the receiver and the giver grow in relatedness with other persons and with the Other.

Persons live within a history in which suffering is an indispensable part of the human relationship of love. Suffering is an essential part of Christian growth. Psychological theories may minimize the role of suffering in the human pursuit of wholeness, but Williams pointedly says that growth in love and in community with others includes suffering.[56]   Servanthood as a

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[54] Ibid., 128.

[55] Williams, Essays in Process Theology , 133.

[56] See Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love , 117-8.

Christian lifestyle entails suffering, and the giving of oneself on another's behalf means some degree of self-denial.

Williams' concept of self-understanding discloses how important self-understanding is to other dimensions of relatedness. His definition and analysis of self-knowledge emphasize the connection between the outward self and the inner life, between God and the self, and between the inner life and the larger society.

Without using the term unconscious, he has conveyed its essence in discussing personal fears, hopes, and anxieties. He has also given us a rich theological perspective on grace. Like Jung, Williams has pointed out the essential tasks of dealing with inner impulses and drives, and the importance of accepting one's inherent potential and weaknesses. This includes reconciling the dominant-superior and passive-inferior personality functions, the tensions within each person. Self-acceptance means reconciliation of the splits in ourselves, such as good and bad, intraversion and extraversion. With multiple feelings, thoughts, and behavior, we allow those things deep within us to come into relationship with our conscious reality so that we might develop the _imago Dei_ in ourselves.

As self-understanding ultimately leads to an understanding of God, and vice-versa, and as human transformation takes place in the context of this interrelatedness, personal encounter with the inner self can transform persons. Transformation often begins with self-awareness. With awareness comes understanding, and with understanding, acceptance and the creative work of transformation.

Implications for Christian Education

One important task of Christian education is to strengthen the process of discerning the self within the faith community based on a three-fold approach:

1. Keep significant I-Thou communication flowing in both directions between teacher and learners, among learners, between all of the people and God.

2. Intentionally use psychological insights and guidelines, not as ends in themselves, but as means to self-understanding and to enriching our theological understanding of God and the world.

3. Train clergy and lay teachers and leaders in spiritual formation, so they can guide the congregation to practice dialogue with the inner self and simultaneously practice the presence of God.

The Flow of Significant I-Thou Communication

An understanding of ourselves and others undergirds a significant flow of I-Thou communication. This involves seeing each other as unique and worthy, accepting individual differences, and having the capacity to listen characterize this communication. A high trust level is a prerequisite emotional climate for effective communication.

A goal of Christian education is to provide varied opportunities for persons to enhance their understanding of themselves so that they might deepen their knowledge of God. Knowledge of the self, not knowledge about self, provides a setting for open communication with God and with others. Church school teachers who have increased in self-understanding can initiate

honest two-way communication with students, with parents of students, with colleagues, and with others in the church without feeling threatened.[57]

Building and strengthening a relationship of trust is critical to enhancing wholesome communication; this is more important than the transmission of information. Communication that is characterized by honesty, acceptance, and trust facilitates persons' opening of themselves to other people and to the Other. This process includes soul-searching and self-revelation. The self-understanding can actually be enhanced by the relationship with others and with God.

The primary group and the faith community play significant roles in providing the setting in which persons can open themselves and others can respond with acceptance and a nonjudgmental attitude. A primary group can either deter or aid in the movement toward self-understanding. The faith community can be a catalyst for enabling persons to discern their gifts and limitations.

Responding to the Deepest Needs of Learners

Williams' and Jung's emphasis on self-knowledge sends the signal that a sound, balanced educational theory and practice is needed. An educational theory with a goal of self-knowledge has a strong focus on responding to the deepest needs of learners. The theory values self-understanding that leads to an understanding of others, God, and the world.

Psychological principles give a wealth of information about human desires and hopes, self-identity and destiny. Some of these fundamental principles which increase an understanding of the self include the following:

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[57] See Fairchild, 403-11.

1. Every person brings certain gifts that enhance the life of a community. The uncovering and nurturing of one's strengths enhance self-worth and self-identity.

2. We interact with our environment in a dynamic way. We shape it; and our environment shapes us. Thus, we have responsibility to each other and to the events around us.

3. We grow in various stages and in different levels and degrees of development. Some tend to develop faster than others. Patience and understanding toward slow learners, and humility on the part of the fast learners, are in order.

4. The thoughts and feelings that have been denied conscious life since childhood are stored in our unconscious. At different moments in our lives, these repressed desires, reactions, hurts, and hopes emerge in our conscious self, often in the form of projection. One sure sign of projection onto others is strong reaction, positive or negative, to certain persons and situations when such a reaction is disproportionate to the situation. We project onto others the things we cannot confront within ourselves. Our task in self-knowing is to increase our awareness of when we project our shadow onto others.

5. Productive and meaningful work motivates persons to be involved. Persons need to feel that a task is important and provides possibilities for growth before they commit to do a job. Motivation arises from a perception that the task will enhance individual learning. Involvement, then, can release individual freedom and creativity.

6. Learning takes place in a dynamic interactive process within the context of a community. A community of dialogue, for instance, teaches respect and trust, and gives persons the freedom to be themselves.

Training in Spiritual Formation

The need for spiritual formation has reemerged in individual and congregational life with vigorous emphasis on spiritual disciplines and spiritual guidance. The role of the lay teachers and leaders, lay professionals, and pastors as spiritual guides is crucial in increasing knowledge of the self and of God; the leaders set a tone and style. They need a high level of self-understanding in order first to discover their own motives for feeling and acting, and to become aware of the attitudes of others. When self-understanding begins in themselves, they will develop a greater capacity to listen and empathize. Self-knowledge that embodies the discernment of the Spirit is one important dimension of spiritual formation.

Spiritual formation is a life-long process that every faithful, covenant-partner of God strives to fulfill. To define spirituality, the church needs to emphasize three crucial points, according to A. Roger Gobbell: (1) The starting point for Christians is the affirmation of one's Christian identity. (2) Every Christian's task is to manifest in daily life the meaning of identity as baptized persons. (3) Spirituality is focused on both the inner life and the life lived with others in the world.[58] Spiritual formation is nurturing life-affirming relatedness with God and the world; it is a dynamic process of growing in responsible caring and justice. The practice of spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, contemplation, and meditation, is expressed in persons' life with others. Such balance is faith at work. Christian spiritual formation is the practice of living in the mind and spirit of Christ.

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[58] A. Roger Gobbell, "On Constructing Spirituality," *Religious Education* 75, no. 4 (July-Aug. 1980) : 409-21.

Spiritual formation does not simply happen; it requires the practice of various disciplines. A training team can guide a congregation in meaningful practices of prayer, meditation, contemplation.[59] Support groups for faith searchers offer another way to enable persons to cultivate their spiritual lives, to share their faith experiences, and to listen and learn from fellow faith travelers. Retreat and camp experiences can provide wholesome settings for intensive Bible study and prayer and for developing koinonia.

Spontaneous and planned liturgy, fellowship, study, and service ministries are important avenues for discovering meaningful expressions of the self and for experiencing the Presence. The intercessory prayers and other elements in corporate worship can become powerful tools for effecting change in the life of the congregation, insofar as liturgy brings alive God's story and vision. Further, Bible study sessions that use a reflection-action-dialogue approach to scriptural passages tend to uncover unconscious needs and concerns of learners. Such an open approach encourages disclosure of the self in a faith community context. More small-group opportunities for self-discovery are a challenge to Christian religious education.

Prayer and liturgical life should enrich and meet the needs of persons and groups of all ages and in different faith-development stages. Teacher training, church group meetings, and classes should incorporate moments of

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[59] See Mary Elizabeth Moore, "Meeting in the Silence," Congregations: Their Power to Form and Transform, ed. C. Ellis Nelson (Atlanta: Knox , 1988), 144-65. See also Wolters, trans., The Cloud of Unknowing.

Henri Nouwen's The Way of the Heart examines the importance of the disciplines of solitude, silence, and prayer for the spiritual life. See Henri J. M. Nouwen, The Way of the Heart: Desert Spirituality and Contemporary Ministry (Minneapolis: Seabury, 1981). See also Eugene Peterson, Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987).

personal and group reflection on their spirituality, with moments of sharing personal experiences of their faith journeys.

The message for churches is not to get caught up in implementing church policies, institutional mandate, and other organizational tasks to the point that spiritual needs of the congregation are neglected. Churches need to provide meaningful opportunities for children, youth, and adults (those connected and those unattached to the faith community) to express their faith struggles, discoveries, and commitments in their own language and religious concepts.

The imagination plays an essential role in strengthening self-understanding, particularly through the discernment process. It is "the act or power of forming a mental image of something not present to the senses or never before wholly perceived in reality."[60] The imagination can enable persons to form significant images and symbols for discovering and nurturing the self, and for communicating with God and others. The formation of meaningful religious images and symbols can transform our beliefs, behavior, attitudes, and values. Thus, we need to nurture our own imagination.

The three approaches for Christian religious education to nurture self-understanding must be expressed in the church and world. Significant I-Thou communication, responding to the deepest needs of learners, and spiritual formation are essential to accepting ourselves and God's Spirit in order to cultivate just and caring relationships.

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[60] "Imagination," *Oxford English Dictionary*," 2nd ed.

CHAPTER 4

Interpersonal Relatedness: Daniel Day Williams' View of Responsible Love and Erik Erikson's Concepts of Intimacy and Generativity

We have explored the concept of self-understanding and how the process of growing in self-discernment strengthens the interconnectedness of the self with God, with the inner being, with the faith community, and with the world. We will now examine Williams' concept of responsible love as manifested in social justice. The term responsible love is used to mean both intelligent caring and compassionate justice. Williams uses the combined terms love and social justice to refer to the spirit of "communion in freedom" which takes seriously the responsibility to care genuinely for others and for the world and to remain faithful to the divine-initiated covenant.[1] The study postulates that life-enhancing relatedness embodies just and responsible caring for God's people, i.e., the whole humanity. We will focus here on interpersonal relatedness.

The insights of Erik Erikson on intimacy and generativity provide a firm psychological grounding for the ensuing examination of Williams' theological perspective on love and justice. The stage of intimacy has been chosen, because it takes place in young adulthood, the period of life when interpersonal relationships emerge as a major life issue. Having been

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[1] Williams, _The Spirit and the Forms of Love_ , 243-75.

critiqued particularly by the feminists for his emphasis on autonomy as a mark of growth, Erikson turns around to point out that attachment, not separation, is a critical mark of young adulthood. Attachment or separation must be directed to significant causes and people if the task is to bring fulfillment. The stage of generativity appropriately focuses on a primary adult concern, the goal of caring. Thus, we will begin with an overview of Erikson's concepts of intimacy and generativity and then examine the theological perspective of the young and middle adult developmental tasks through Williams' thinking on love and social justice.

Erik Erikson's Concepts of Intimacy and Generativity

In all of the stages of human development described by Erikson, he highlights the crucial role of relationships. His theory maintains that the evolving individual and the environment interact. The powerful impact of relationships is especially visible in his adult developmental theory of intimacy and generativity. Intimacy is the crisis or developmental task of early adulthood, and generativity, the crisis in middle adulthood. Both offer potential for growth and, at the same time, risks of vulnerability and of isolation and self-absorption, or detachment from others.[2] These crises are closely related, and every crisis offers an opportunity for individual growth.[3] When persons commit themselves to significant others and worthwhile causes, they manifest an act of caring. Conversely, when they avoid experiences of close affiliations, they enter into a self-confining, suffocating world built around themselves.

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[2] See Erikson, Childhood and Society, 263-68.

[3] Erik Erikson, The Life Cycle Completed: A Review, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton, 1985), 71. John Elias, Psychology and Religious Education (Bethlehem: Catechetical Communications, 1979), 32.

Intimacy, as Erikson defines it, is the capacity to commit oneself to concrete affiliation and partnerships and to develop the ethical strength to abide by such commitments, despite the call for significant sacrifices and compromises.[4] Devotion and loyalty to one or more significant others, to affiliations, and to causes are critical developmental tasks in young adulthood. Failure to accomplish the task, Erikson points out, results in isolation and the inability to attach oneself to others and to causes.[5] Isolation and self-absorption constitute a rejection or denial of life with others. The self becomes engrossed with personal ambitions, concerns, and inner drives, or with self-pity and remorse to the point that one builds walls around oneself that leaves other people outside one's life. Isolation and self-absorption can become dangerously suffocating. Disconnection from meaningful interaction with others is tantamount to living without water and food. Such existence does not last for long without consequent harmful effects on the individuals concerned, for human beings have been created for healthy relationships. Persons with psychopathological and neurotic tendencies can shut off themselves from the world and thus, miss the opportunities to grow in love with other humans. In this stage the young adults struggle to achieve close relationships that have both demands and rewards. They face crucial decisions as to life partnership, career, and where and how to invest their time and energy outside of work to make contributions to the community and society at large.

While Erikson emphasizes a relationship of intimacy, he has underscored the importance of autonomy as a predecessor to intimacy; this is

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[4] Erikson, _Childhood and Society_ , 263.

[5] See Elias, 42.

the point that some feminists have critiqued in relation to female and male tendencies.[6] For Erikson, autonomy involves certainty and security of knowing ourselves and being able to contribute to the community because of our individual identity and vocation. Such view of autonomy can strengthen, rather than weaken, relationships, according to Erikson. Feeling secure and confident of who I am and what I can do can cultivate a sense of trust and other virtues in oneself and others.

Erikson goes further by saying that developing positive-growth relationships leads to a sense of integrity and self-fulfillment.[7] For Erikson, intimacy provides an affiliative kind of interplay or dialogue between persons and binds them despite their own idiosyncrasies.[8] Individual identity persists even in intimacy with others. The power of individuals in relationship demands shared patterns of living with mutuality in basic values and rights, as well as open expression of each person's identity, and united loyalty to meet shared goals. To reach the desired level of intimacy, young adults must

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[6] Some feminist theorists contend that women tend to give priority to relationships, while men tend to focus on separation and autonomy. See Gilligan, _In a Different Voice_, and Anne Wilson Schaef, _Women's Reality_.

Nancy Chodorow's concept of women's mothering shows that women, and not men, are the primary caregivers, socializers, and nurturers of children. She maintains that the "women's capacities for mothering are . . . built developmentally into the feminine psychic structure." See Nancy Chodorow, _The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender_ (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1978), 3-110, 39.

See also Erikson, _Life History and the Historical Moments_ (New York: Norton, 1975) 225-47. In the chapter, "Once More the Inner Space," Erikson applauds the unique contribution of women.

[7] In his theory of psychosocial development, Erikson clearly points out that the capacity to nurture healthy relationships in various stages of life provides a personal sense of satisfaction and happiness. See Erikson, _Childhood and Society_, 247-74.

[8] Erikson, _The Life Cycle Completed_, 71.

choose worthwhile causes and significant persons and participate in relation to them.

The human virtue of love emerges when adults resolve the tension between intimacy and isolation, according to Erikson.[9] He postulates that love, the greatest of human virtues, is the "mutuality of mature devotion" that attempts to resolve the hostilities normally found in disunited tasks.[10] Love embodies growth, commitment to goodness, harmony, inclusiveness, and shared aims.

Erikson uses the term generativity primarily to define the task of middle adults to establish and guide the next generation.[11] The word originates from the Latin "generare," i.e., generate, which means "to beget, procreate, engender."[12] Erikson constructs the term "generativity" to refer to the way that adults continually generate, e.g., " children, products, ideas, works of art."[13] Failure to accomplish the task, he points out, leads to self-absorption and stagnation, characterized by obsessive self concern and apathy. Middle adults who have fully or partially fulfilled the developmental tasks in their childhood and youth tend to move into the generativity stage with less pain and struggle than those who have failed to resolve the earlier stage crises. When persons stagnate, they direct all their interests and

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[9] Ibid., 71. Erikson uses the words "strength" and "virtue" interchangeably.

[10] Ibid., 71.

[11] Erikson, Childhood and Society, 267.

[12] "Generate," Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed.

[13] Richard Evans, Dialogue with Erik Erikson (New York: Harper & Row, 1967) , 51.

concerns to themselves. They may feel apathetic to the existing problems around their world. They fail to relate, much less to serve others.

Erikson theorizes that the developmental task of generativity produces the human virtue of care.[14] Therefore, middle adults face the crucial challenge to cultivate and pass on responsible caring. The culmination of the task comes in persons' continuing work to bring peace and justice to the world and to secure an economically safe and sound environment.

The essential function of generative adults consists of guiding, tending, and being responsible for the present and future generations. Adults pass on their insights and treasures to the young. The responsibility to care is an ethical concern. The developmental task of generativity poses a tremendous challenge to guide, to care for future generations, and to help guarantee a society that upholds ideal values and strives to achieve humanizing and liberating goals.

Erikson challenges every adult in the generative stage to assume three roles, namely, to be "a numinous model, a judge of evil, and a transmitter of ideal values."[15] The numinous paradigm exudes authenticity in caring, a sense of relatedness with an all-embracing, transcendent Presence, and a sense of being an important "I" in the midst of an inclusive "we" community. As generative adults develop an awareness of the destructive presence of evil in the world, they work toward building up trust and bringing harmony and hope.

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[14] Erikson, The Life Cycle Completed, 67.

[15] Ibid., 70.

Williams' View of Responsible Love

The insights of Erikson on intimacy and generativity illuminate for us the theological perspective of Daniel Day Williams on responsible love as expressed in caring justly. The need for close relationships and a creative and generative life with others presuppose the givenness of communal relatedness. As pointed out in Erikson's theory, commitment and sharing characterize the relationship that grows out of resolving the primary emotional turning point among young adults. The adult developmental tasks for these two specific adult stages are fulfilled to the extent that adults gain inner satisfaction in trusting, in open sharing of themselves and in receiving the gifts that others offer. To be attached to significant causes accomplishes a vital human need for making sense of life. In Erikson's thinking, social involvement strengthens the self and fulfills a vital adult developmental task. Williams' thinking places the task in a biblical perspective. To be involved in just and compassionate acts, in the context of a faith community, is a faithful response to the covenantal relationship with God. Interpersonal relatedness that is rooted in divine love carries the ethical responsibility to act justly towards our neighbors.

As persons discover their personal identity, they develop trust in themselves and in others and have a greater capacity to enter into close relationships with other persons. People on this journey toward intimacy need to recognize the Power higher and greater than themselves if interpersonal relationships and attachment to causes are to have deep, lasting value. Throughout the centuries, adherents of the Judeo-Christian traditions claim the centrality of healthy and strong relationship with God. They need to accept and concretize the reality of God's presence as the personal Companion and Guide. The ongoing journey of being authentically

human affirms and enhances meaningful relationships with the divine Being and the world. The tasks of enriching intimacy and generativity entail social and moral responsibility.

Five Dimensions of Human Love

Williams deals with the ethical issue of responsible love in his formulation of the dimensions of human love. He proposes five qualities as necessary for human love.[16]   First, persons need the capacity to take account of each others' unique individuality. Human love involves acceptance and cherishing of the other. Williams says that the commitment people make in the relationship of love has the element of "not-yet," which is the unknown future.[17]   We always face risks and ambiguities whenever we commit ourselves to persons and situations.

Secondly, to love includes affirmation of each other's freedom as expressed in how we respond to risks and ambiguities in the caring relationship. Love is neither coercive nor compulsive. Because we are free, we face and accept the realities that may block the flow of love. However, to grow in love is to grow in freedom to be able to face the stark realities and remain committed in loving relationship.

Third, to love is to experience and accept suffering. Our love is not simply the giving of ourselves to others. It is also allowing others to act upon us and to transform us, and that implies suffering, according to Williams' definition. For Williams, suffering in broad terms is "the capacity to be acted

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[16] Williams, _The Spirit and the Forms of Love_ , 114-22.

[17] Ibid., 115.

upon, to be changed, moved, transformed, by the action of or in relation to another."[18]

Fourth, love involves causality, which consists of taking account of the past and responding to possibilities in the future.[19] Events in the past impact the present and the future; similarly our present human actions and thoughts learn from the past and affect future planning and actions. All the qualities of love imply the importance of the past and the future in living each moment with caring. In love, persons express concern for others' growth in creativity and freedom. Appropriation of the past and genuine openness to the future strengthen love, transforming relationships and enhancing freedom with the divine being and the world.

Fifth, love involves objectivity. Specifically, love includes "impartial judgment in (one's) concern for others." Persons who enter a love relationship need self-knowledge and understanding of others and awareness of situations in a larger context. This requires critical reflection.

Williams contends that the same qualities apply when we speak of God's love. God's love constitutes trust, freedom, suffering, and openness to the present and future. Moreover, God's love makes intelligent judgment, not based on sentimentality but on genuine concern for others. Love encompasses the present, the past, and the future; it is always in process.

Williams' process theology presupposes that the events which constitute the world, with God as the "supreme actuality," are all connected in an orderly, definite and related pattern.[20] In establishing intimacy, God is

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[18] Ibid., 117.

[19] Ibid., 119.

[20] Williams, Essays in Process Theology, 43.

the reality who stands between persons, and between persons and their causes. Awareness of God's presence and response to divine-creative love strengthen the relationship, whereas rejection of the divine leads to brokenness and alienation.

Based upon Erikson's thinking, the development of intimacy and generativity in young and middle adults calls for commitment to meaningful causes and for generous giving of the self to enable others in purposeful living. Commitment of one's whole being to a greater Cause leads to discovery of lasting values. In the Christian perspective, the discovery is tantamount to an experience of the transcendent Other, who is the ever-present, personal Guide.

We are created to be in relationship. Williams has repeatedly stressed the biblical-theological truth that persons are created in communion with God and with one another. To reject this essential connectedness means to deny our nature. Separation from the creative Source of love and goodness means sin or brokenness, from Williams' perspective.[21] Persons in a state of brokenness deny the relationship that God has initially established. Despite the brokenness, however, connectedness still exists. Connectedness can never be fully destroyed.

The breaking of caring relations does not fully destroy the connection we have with the Creator. God's promise is that at all times and in all places, God remains the same in love. Sometimes our connections are full of pain. We suffer, and God suffers, too, when despair grips us. Hence, we need to nurture our connectedness. We cannot do it alone. We need to care for ourselves, for others, for the world, and for our relationship with the

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[21] Williams, _The Spirit and the Forms of Love_, 161.

Creator-Redeemer in order to nurture those connections. Restoration of the broken relationship entails recognition and intentional effort to manifest the imago Dei nature and to respond faithfully to God's redemptive love. A significant sign that persons are so connected with the divine and others is seen in their acts of caring.

Generative adults manifest the virtue of care, according to Erikson. The call for caring and justice is especially important in adulthood because the psychological resolution of the adult crises of intimacy and generativity demands connecting the self with others and with causes, and nurturing the future generations for a better society. Relatedness and nurturance involve the practice of love as expressed in social justice.

Responsible Love and Social Justice

According to Williams, responsible love is expressed in social justice, and this adds an important dimension to Erikson's understanding of generativity. In Erikson's view, caring for others strengthens relationships with them, particularly with one's primary group, and it gives a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction. The result is a strengthened selfhood. In Williams' view, the experience of the creative and redemptive love of God evokes just action on behalf of persons in one's immediate relationships and on behalf of those in the larger, global community. Middle-age adults are responsible for ensuring that society holds ideal values, such as equality, justice, honesty, integrity.

Williams helps us perceive the meaning of responsible love as constituted in social justice and the task of Christians to participate in making love and justice a reality. For Williams, responsible love is a faith response to God's love which finds expression in becoming my-sister's or brother's keeper. We respond to another in need because of a sense of love

from the Creator and Redeemer and a sense of responsibility to participate in divine love. Responsible love enhances persons' freedom to become faithful to the covenant-initiating God. With discernment of our interrelatedness with God's creation, we grow into using freedom responsibly within the context of a community of worship, koinonia, and diakonia. Naivete and superficiality do not have a place in responsible love, which involves intelligent and authentic relationships. Responsible love acts within the immediate present situation and is part of the history of God's creative and redemptive work with the laos , the faith community.[22]

Williams' emphasis on communion with God and faithfulness to the source of love and justice provides the impetus to reflect on justice and to act justly. Using the Bible as a foundational source for his doctrine, he brings out the interdependence of justice and love in human and divine relationship, and in personal and communal encounters. Further, he believes that the task of the Christian faith community is to seek, build, and strengthen a community that is redeemed and united in God's kingdom of love and justice.

Williams interprets the scripture as saying that the spirit of relationship between God and persons, and among persons characterizes justice more than adherence to a set of standard norms. He emphasizes that love serves as a foundation for justice and expresses itself in justice. The concept of justice for biblical writers is not an abstract set of principles but a universal personal concern for individual human beings.[23] True justice is rooted in love; and genuine love is made visible in justice. History, as recorded in scripture, reveals God's justice and mercy.

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[22] Ibid. , 247.

[23] Ibid., 245-6.

Williams reinforces the New Testament teaching that ministry in love to persons in need is beyond any ideological precept on justice. Love is at work whenever a community of believers meets a person or a group in need and serves them in genuine care, asserts Williams.[24] He believes that involvement in political justice issues expresses one's love for God and for persons in need because participation enhances the reconciling and healing life of the community. This implies that love and justice are expressed within the context of a community, i.e., where two or three are gathered in Christ's name.

The Scripture presents the concept that love evokes action toward another. The New Testament explicitly reveals different social actions that arise out of one's love for God and neighbor. Williams does not normally identify scripture texts; however, he mentions acts of love from the Gospel account, such as loving the enemy, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked.[25] Williams emphasizes strongly that "justice is the order which love requires."[26] Since a primary focus of the aim of love is for human relationship, justice can make this communion happen. Those who exercise justice do not serve a select few, but all classes and types. Williams also relates the community of faith to a larger community including those who do not use the scriptures. Everyone, without exception, is included in a just, loving community.[27] He states the biblical demand to treat others justly and humanly, irrespective of their race, religious affiliation, and socio-economic

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[24] Ibid., 246.

[25] See Matthew 25: 35-36.

[26] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love , 250.

[27] Ibid., 260.

status. He affirms a key message in the Bible that all persons are created in the image of God and as such are called to care and to be just to one another.

Both love and justice function mutually in God's work of creating a shalom community. Williams differs somewhat with Reinhold Niebuhr in defining justice. In discussing the social systems of justice, Reinhold Niebuhr contends that justice is a lesser order because it accommodates to the interests of each one.[28] A just system is based on balancing the power of the social forces. For Williams, justice is an indispensable expression of love, without which love would not fully be a reality. Niebuhr would agree with this perspective, but he emphasizes the sacrificial nature of genuine love and the accommodating pattern of justice.[29] In any loving relationship persons treat each other equally. No one oppresses another. In reality, however, some degree of oppression is present in societies. Justice requires that resources and control of resources be accessible to all people, not to a few powerful people. Justice requires that those who have deprived people of resources and thus, of power, must return what belongs to others.[30] The Bible, says Williams, treats justice as the "objectification of the spirit of love" in human and divine relationships.[31]

God's justice includes mercy and is in itself God's righteousness.[32] Williams quotes from Micah 6:8 to show the dialectical relationship between

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[28] Ibid., 243.

[29] Ibid., 243.

[30] See Walter Brueggemann, et al., To Act Justly, Love Tenderly, Walk Humbly: An Agenda for Ministers (New York: Paulist, 1986) , 5-28.

[31] Ibid., 245.

[32] Ibid., 245.

justice and mercy. God demands, on one hand, the practice of justice, and on the other hand, the act of mercy and compassion. Williams stresses that both the Old Testament and the New Testament proclaim God's justice as inclusive of His mercy toward the weak, the hurt, and the oppressed.[33] The Gospel accounts of Jesus' call to care for the poor suggest the close relationship between justice and compassion.

Williams asserts that in the life of the Christian community, various issues of justice arise as the community attempts to meet the needs of people.[34] In the process of ministering to others, the members of the faith community realize that they themselves need the ministries of listening and healing. They discover that God's compassion and righteousness become their "balm of Gilead." Ministry to and with others in the name of love and justice is grounded on the life, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus.[35] Our connectedness with God in Christ inspires us to carry on Christ's ministry. Such ministry exemplifies caring and just relationships. The Christian's task, according to Williams, is to seek and do acts of love, knowing that Christ died for all persons.[36] From this perspective, Christian ethics involves an ongoing action and reflection and a faithful search for the demands of love in every human situation and communal setting, in the light of Christ's life-giving love.

A key issue in social justice is theological; it has to do with the nature of God. God's mercy and righteousness are also God's justice; and God's justice is manifested in the new order of creative and reconciling work and in

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[33] See Psalm 72:1 & 4 and Deuteronomy 24:18 (RSV).

[34] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love , 246.

[35] Williams refers to Philippians 2: 5-8.

[36] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love , 247.

human freedom. Our understanding of God in Christ as the Revealer of love incorporates the view of God as just; persons who have been created in God's image are to reveal that love and justice. Another issue in social justice is economic and political, because economics and politics affect communal and global relationships. The source of power comes from those who take and control resources. Social justice calls into question the inequitable distribution of resources that actually belong to all God's people who have been given the dominion of the earth.

Williams' discussion of the Christological basis of justice and love shows "the deep need of persons for communion, the present expression of love in history, and the agape nature of God's action, not human action.[37] He points out that we decide to love and to act justly not simply because we want to obey laws, but rather to find communion with others and with God.

Further, he stresses that doing God's will and loving God and others do not necessarily mean expressing genuinely the meaning of agape. Perhaps, the motivating force for loving is the deeper need for self-gratification. The moment persons assert their righteousness before God, which Williams calls self-justification, the spirit of love and a sense of justice vanish. Christ and his love motivates us to love. Thus, it is important to remember Paul's admonition to "have the mind of Christ" (Col. 2:6 RSV) and to "be transformed by the renewing of our minds in Christ" (Rom. 12:2 RSV).

Williams has emphatically said that to act in responsible love is our Christian vocation.[38] We are called to heal hurts, mend brokenness, reconcile those who have been separated from the life-Source and from one another

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[37] Ibid., 247-9.

[38] See Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls, 101-2.

because of pride, bigotry, enmity, and different forms of dehumanizing "isms." Those who exercise responsible love possess a passion for caring justly. Our responsibility for caring justly goes both to the victims and the victimizers, the oppressed and the oppressors. Williams presupposes that Christians often fall into the trap of communicating their concern for the oppressed by judging harshly the group that has caused the unjust act.[39] Rather than stirring support for their just cause, social justice advocates often receive negative response from the people they want to help transform. To love responsibly involves an impartial attitude to both the oppressed and the oppressors and a clear discernment of the issues at hand, as well as a biblical-theological stance. Although justice requires that we treat everyone equally, it is, by definition, partial to the oppressed and committed to fighting against injustice. Dan Rhoades describes justice as commitment to rectify all forms of unjust oppression.[40] Faithfulness to the scripture means that whatever belongs to other persons must be returned to them.

Caring is humanitarian concern when it reflects and expresses "the mind of Christ,"says Williams.[41] It is true that without the mind of Christ, human generosity and benevolence to those in need may lead to a paternalistic, self-centered attitude.

Williams asserts that "agape . . . transcends humanitarianism."[42] He adds that while it affirms empathy and identification with the other, agape

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[39] Daniel Day Williams, "Christian Faith and Social Action," TS, n.d., pp. 8-9.

[40] Dan Rhoades, response notes to author, 9 Aug. 1989.

[41] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love, 260.

[42] Ibid., 262.

participates in the history of a forgiving and merciful love toward sinners, in the context of Christ's life, suffering, death, and resurrection. Williams challenges the church and other communities to demonstrate caring and compassion through their struggle for, and practice of, justice. He contends that the church is "the one community which . . . places itself squarely under the judgment of the love which seeks one redeemed humanity in the kingdom of God."[43]

Williams' prophetic view of persons in history discloses an underlying need for responsible love. He says, "We are created for communion, significant action, and stewardship of the earth."[44] Williams summons God's people to fulfill their covenant relationships and respond to God's faithfulness and love. The members of the Christian faith community are called to participate in Christ's ministry of love. For Williams, significant action is participation with love and justice in causes that attempt to transform and renew human conditions and relationships.[45] The action of just caring and compassionate justice becomes a sacramental, vocational act only as God's justice, righteousness, and mercy undergird our work.[46]

The specific task to be God's faithful stewards underscores the prominent place of human beings in God's world and the crucial role of persons to be caretakers of all creations. From the Christian perspective,

[43] Ibid., 275.

[44] Daniel Day Williams, "The Uniqueness of Man: The Prophetic Dimension," TS, n.d., n.p. This paper was presented at the Nobel Conference organized by Gustavus Adolphus College, Minneapolis in 1968. See also Williams, "The Prophetic Dimension," 139-63.

[45] See Williams, "Christian Faith and Social Action."

[46] Ibid., p. 6.

taking care of one another involves responsible caring in our personal, communal, and global living. To care justly involves the risky, unpopular task of judging and contending against injustice and other life-destroying forces. The transforming power of love is possible only through the working of the Spirit and through the faithful work of human beings with the Spirit in restraining injustice and spreading justice with compassion.

Implications for Christian Education

Williams' concept of ethical justice illuminates the true meaning of love as posited in the Old and New Testaments. His thinking evokes serious reflection on the demand to act justly and to discern the meaning of responsible love. His definition of social justice clarifies our understanding of love for God and for the other.

The church faces the task of increasing the consciousness of its members about the biblical and theological perspective of justice on one hand, and the unjust conditions in our immediate community and larger society, on the other. Theological inquiry on the meaning of faith in our personal lives and in a hungry, war-torn world clarify questions and provide insights that will enable the participating community to respond. In the light of God's creative and redemptive love in Christ, what do we mean when we affirm "God is love," and how can we manifest God's love in each situation?[47]

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[47] Williams says that his inquiry approach concurs with the contextualists. He contends that all Christian ethic is contextual so far as love is the guiding principle. The ethical question begins with defining God's basic nature, followed by human response. Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love, 247.

Purpose, Planning , Program

As theologians-in- residence, local church pastors and lay professionals need to be equipped to face the emerging justice issues and concerns of their congregations. Honesty in communicating their beliefs, without alienating the members who differ from them, requires a trust relationship with the constituents. Personal contact in their homes, work place and study and fellowship groups can open doors for developing and strengthening mutual trust.

The task of the clergy includes setting aside a regular time and place for dialogue with the congregation,starting with key church leaders. Nothing can happen effectively without purpose, planning, and a program of action. These three P's serve as a guide for the exercise of responsible caring. The purpose of the faith community is to participate in God's reconciling and healing love. The purpose arises from its identity as a community of God's people with common traditions and hopes for a full realization of God's realm. As faith communities reflect upon and interpret the message and implications of the Scripture, as they appropriate the traditions and share common ministry, they define their purpose. Williams says that identity is both a given that we discover and something that we form in response to our vocation.[48] Planning involves intelligent judgment in the exercise of caring. Giving ourselves to others is not a self-debasing, humiliating act, but rather a humbling, loving expression of our gratitude and love to the Creator-Redeemer. In planning, the care-givers, of the faith community should make certain that they perceive the real, not imagined, needs of those for whom they care. They should also make a realistic assessment of the work

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[48] Williams, Essays in Process Theology , 132.

required to meet those needs. In the program of action for social justice, the congregation asks itself, What does our faith say in this situation? How can we best confront the issue? What specific action should we take? The program begins with a faith statement rather than with an immediate solution. This is an important dimension to the congregation's approach to social justice concerns.

The pastor's teaching approach, using dialogue and biblical and theological exploration, can prove more useful than giving several sermons on the same theme. Challenging teaching in the church heightens faith awareness. Hopefully, it also undercuts the potent influence of secular media that portray a different picture of the socio-economic -political issues.

Many clergy feel so overburdened with their parish work that they choose not to teach an adult study. Perhaps, they need to use better time management. For instance, I asked one judicatory leader what he considers to be a needed priority of his ministers. He said instantaneously, "better time management." To be effective theologians-in -residence, clergy need to find hours of concentrated reading and reflection on a regular basis.

Prophetic Uocation

Getting involved in ministries for social justice means taking seriously the prophetic vocation of the church. We need "village greens" in our churches and seminaries, various locations for spontaneous and planned sharing of concerns for social justice. The village symbolizes humble, unpretentious beginnings; and green signifies growth. In village greens, persons come together to face common problems dealing with injustice and

violation of human rights.[49] Rather than simply ask what the problem is, the group responds to the question, How can we together solve the problem? Rosemary Haughton, a Roman Catholic feminist theologian and writer, says that the first task of a prophet is to call people to anger and grief and announce what's wrong.[50] Prophetic grief, not despair, grows out of understanding the situation of the people, both the oppressed and the oppressors. Perhaps, clergy who play down their prophetic role do so because they or their congregations are not ready to hear the prophetic message or to risk themselves. Discipleship is costly, and neither the clergy nor the laity want to pay the price. We end up with many comfortable pews and few uneasy faith sharers and disciple makers.

Further, clergy and lay members who dance to the tune of one-sided theological music without prophetic notes are shutting out the cries of other human beings for justice and compassion. Their congregation replays the same theological music. One-sided theology emphasizes either grace or sin, the kingdom of God or vocation. For example, one-sided theology may focus only on "God is good. Don't worry. All is well. So be happy." Another theological orientation may proclaim an ongoing recitation of human sinfulness and evil in the world, and stress only the negative human side and the second coming. We need to heed Williams' call for a balance in our theological formulations and an application of them to personal and communal life.

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[49] Credit for the use of the concept of village green goes to James Wall. James Wall," A Visit to the Village Green," lecture notes of author, Vanderbilt University Convocation, Nashville, 1982.

[50] Rosemary Haughton, lecture notes of author, Convocation of the Federation of Theological Schools, Cambridge, England, 29 April, 1988.

Praxis' Agenda: Social Justice

Education for social justice has become a cliche in the education field and has somehow lost its central place in church school curriculum. Congregations need to recover social justice in intergenerational and age-level teaching and learning. Teachers, for example, should use specific examples and creative approaches to clarify the meaning of justice and love. A Sunday School class that warmly welcomes and accepts persons with handicapping conditions, and persons of unorthodox, unconventional lifestyles exemplifies what caring means. Sunday schools have too often protected the church's status quo. Many long-time adult church goers feel satisfied to relate with members of the same ethnic, socio- economic background, rather than to take the risk of reaching out to the marginalized, alienated, and oppressed.

Education for social justice begins with the clergy, the lay leaders and teachers. Churches should initiate or support existing Christian movements that advocate for peace, ecology, human rights and solidarity with persons victimized by unjust systems and structures. The Christian community that embodies the true spirit of caring finds ways to meet the needs of persons even in the midst of a risky environment of opposing cultural ethos.

Generative Adults

The development of meaningful and faithful relationships between generative adults and those of the next generation depends upon a community that genuinely cares through its healing and reconciling ministries. The Christian community, whose sense of responsible caring emerges from a sense of purpose and a vision for shalom, nurtures adults to enable them to manifest just caring.

The church needs to provide opportunities for middle-aged adults to become productive and creative. For instance, church leaders should respond to those who complete talent bank forms and offer persons jobs that they feel most capable and comfortable doing. Many times, the church waits for vacancies, and then calls on members to fill the volunteer positions. Rather than work on a process from job to person, the church will do better if it begins with persons, knowing their interests and capabilities and then inviting them to do a job that fits their abilities as well as meeting a church need. Church leaders have a good chance of getting adult volunteers if they combine persistence with gentle persuasion. The experience of being cared for by mentors in the church motivates adults to give their time and gifts for volunteer ministry.

The care of souls, a vital function of both clergy and laity, and a task which Erikson describes as a virtue of generative adults, is every Christian's vocation. A faith community receives nurture as it guides and strengthens others in acts of compassion, caring, and justice. One valuable approach is to initiate a sponsorship ministry.

Sponsorship

The concept of sponsorship, which James Fowler has advocated, deserves full support.[51] Fowler says that those who belong to a community of sponsorship participate in providing a secure, safe place in which persons can face the crucial tasks of transformation and reformation.[52] A community of sponsorship also provides resources to discern theological and biblical

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[51] See James W. Fowler, Faith Development and Pastoral Care (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987) , 115-20.

[52] Ibid., 115-6.

insights and grow in the faith. The stories and images that a community of sponsors offer can illumine persons' understanding of life, death, and rebirth. The faith community also encourages the practice of spiritual disciplines.

One of the prerequisites for Christian nurture, Henri Nouwen says, is to have someone who is willing and able to become a mentor and sponsor for another.[53] Williams would concur with Fowler and Nouwen that sponsors have a vital place in the nurturing life of the congregation. The sponsors become encouragers, affirmers, and reinforcers of the church and cultural ethos; thus, they strengthen life-enhancing relatedness. The ministry of sponsorship provides an avenue for middle adults to use their gifts, to be creative and productive. Young adults become both recipients and providers of the sponsorship ministry.

Erikson's thinking communicates a strong message to churches to initiate and strengthen adult ministries in which individuals form life-affirming relationships and develop healthy bonding and responsible caring. Adult mentors who demonstrate a lively faith can inspire, guide and help to plan meaningful experiences for others.

The church must capture the urge among young adults to lose themselves in others and in causes and make it possible for them to find a close, committed relationship with the Creator-Redeemer and with members of the faith community. The church cannot afford to lose this age group of adults. They are in the critical stage of forming relationships with significant persons and causes. The church should encourage them to support causes for social justice and human rights. The church that is in tune with the young

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[53] Referred in John Westerhoff, Building God's People in a Materialistic World (New York: Seabury, 1983) , 116. No primary source listing.

adult culture provides nontraditional ways of reaching them in order to communicate the Judeo-Christian faith, to dialogue, to grapple with issues, and to see and experience problems that confront the church and society.

The church that understands its mission can identify and find young adults in the community who feel compelled to attach themselves to life-affirming relationships and causes. Clergy and lay leaders need personal integrity and enthusiasm, discerning spirit, and a vision of the church's task if they are to minister effectively with young adults. A distressing reality is that young adults, particularly singles, who are most in need of a sense of belonging, often find the church the last place to provide such need. This group is a tremendous challenge for the church leadership.

The Challenge

A crucial challenge for Christian education is to provide experiences whereby an adult can grow into becoming what Erikson calls a "numinous model, a judge of evil, and a transmitter of ideal values."[54] Erikson's description of the roles of generative adults can be translated into the clergy's roles of pastor, prophet, and teacher-evangelist. The generative adult is: (1) Secure and confident in identity and calling. The marks of inner strength, unassuming leadership, contagious warmth, and reassuring presence. demonstrate the numinous dimension of being. (2) Capable of listening, guiding, and taking care of "sick souls." Preaching and caring of the constituents are pastoral tasks. (3) Increasingly aware of the presence of evil and able to take the risky challenge of communicating God's story of the

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[54] Erik Erikson, The Life Cycle Completed, 70. Otto defines numinous as the mystery surrounding Christ's nature as holy, transcendent, and an all-presence and power. See Rudolf Otto, The Idea of the Holy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1923).

covenant, that is, God's act of love and the human response of faith. The task is not so much to judge evil as to "overcome evil with good." Both clergy and laity are entrusted to transmit faith with the hope that the message will give people a foundation for a meaningful life and will transform and renew them.

These three roles involve communicating fundamental religious values through the life of the congregation. These are formidable, yet rewarding, tasks for pastors, lay leaders, and educators of the church.

CHAPTER 5

Communal Relatedness: Williams' Concept of the Faith Community and John Westerhoff and Thomas Groome's Religious Education Theory

The interrelatedness of persons comes into focus in Daniel Day Williams' theological understanding of the church. His ecclesiological position embodies the process concept that in and through a genuine community of faith persons discover God, themselves, others, and the world in a dynamic way. Redemption and reconciliation are experienced in the community, and they lead to compassionate and responsible caring. Persons do not discover the meaning of responsible caring and agape simply by the examination of the inner self, Williams says.[1] Rather, persons discover in their inner self a felt need, a longing, which only responsible caring rooted in divine love can meet. The church, in Williams' thought, responds to the fundamental human need to relate with the people who share God's acts and vision of love.

Williams' Concept of the Faith Community

Williams' claim about the significant place of the faith community comes into focus in the formulation of his theological anthropology. At the outset he maintains that persons are created as social beings whose fundamental inner drive is "the will to belong."[2] He points out that human

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[1] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love, 205.

[2] Ibid., 209. See pages 146-205 for an exposition on the meaning of the human drive to belong.

beings crave to be recognized, accepted, and supported for their own values.[3] Affirmation and acceptance of one's own worth intensifies one's sense of identity and leads to a positive regard towards others and the world. Williams postulates that the community that responds to this basic human needs motivates persons to participate in God's creative process and in service to God. For Williams, the community of faith meets the human longing for "communion in freedom and love" with the loving and just God. This community of love affirms life in all relationships

Williams demonstrates the vital place of the church in Christian faith in his personal life and theological reconstruction. He calls the church "a community of life and meaning."[4] What the church is and does gives persons the opportunity to find their identity and purpose in life. He holds strongly the view that the church nurtures the faith and strengthens the identity of persons as having been created in God's image. The fact that persons are created for communion in love and freedom makes the church all the more important one.[5] John Cobb once commented that of all process theologians, Williams was most capable of "relating process theology to the life of the church."[6] Williams emphasizes the church alive in mission as it invokes the free expression of the spirit of love. Further, a vital church fulfills its called ministry as it participates in the dynamic action of Christ in individual lives

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[3] Ibid., 209.

[4] Daniel Day Williams, "The Centrality of Christ," TS, n.d., p. 5.

[5] Ibid., p. 136.

[6] In an Interview of Charles Blackburn with John Cobb, on Daniel Day Williams. See Charles Blackburn, "The Theology of Daniel Day Williams: Foundation for Ministry," (Ph.D.diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1975) , p. 156.

and in the world. The church enters and sustains a process relationship with God and the world.

While the family and other primary relationships can deepen direct personal relationships and can enable I-Thou relationships to take place, Williams sees the church as the one community that acknowledges God's love in Christ as the undergirding force in its life, structure, and work.[7] Thus, the church also accepts the judgment of God's love. Williams recognizes that other groups besides the church strive to live in selfless love, but he maintains that the church alone is accountable to the demands of the Gospel. The Gospel, with decisive historic beginnings in the life of the Hebrew people and in Jesus Christ, challenges the church genuinely to express love for God and neighbors.

Atonement

Williams discloses the relatedness of the faith community with God and the world in his hermeneutic of the atonement. His perspective on atonement and reconciliation undergirds his understanding of the church. He maintains that the atonement is the foundation of the church, i.e., the new community that has been created through God's saving act in Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection.[8] The church exists as a visible, dynamic expression of God's atoning act in Christ and of human participation in redemptive and reconciling work. He points out that the Holy Spirit's creation of the new community manifests God's act of love through the atonement of Christ. He also stresses that central to atonement is the suffering and death of Jesus.[9] He implies

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[7] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love, 273.

[8] Daniel Day Williams, "The Church," TS, 10 April 1973, p. 3.

[9] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love, 185-6.

that the church shares in Christ's suffering as it lives out the ministries of healing and reconciliation.

For Williams, atonement is not simply the beginning of a new relationship. Rather, it is the creation of a new humanity, a new community, the church, "the new being in history" through God's reestablishment of God's love.[10] God's redemptive act in Christ has created, is creating, and will create the new community. This community relives the memory of God's decisive act of love in Jesus' atoning act and in the hope that God's reconciling love will pervade human life.

Whenever the community experiences the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, new expressions of love occur which reach people of all levels.[11] The community receives the Holy Spirit by faith and love, and the Holy Spirit heals and renews the broken community.

Williams analyzes the atonement by exploring reconciliation in human experience. He analyzes reconciliation as God's work of reestablishing the community of love with the people; he examines four dimensions of reconciliation.[12]

1. Disclosure refers to unraveling and discerning deep hurts and guilt. It moves beyond the awareness of existing conflicts. Disclosure comes through increased consciousness of the wrong and manifestation of the right, the good.

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[10] Ibid., 188.

[11] Ibid., 190.

[12] Ibid., 176, 177-91.

2. Loyalty and suffering means renewed faithfulness to the broken community after personal breach of trust. The life of Christ best exemplifies both commitment to God and suffering on behalf of the sins of humanity.

3. I-Thou relationships communicate personal trust and acceptance, opening the way for reconciliation.

4. The new community, founded on the creative and redemptive love of God in Christ, serves as the context in which persons renew their love as they participate in the act of atonement.

The descriptive image that Williams gives of the church, i.e., a community of active participants in the atonement, broadens the traditional view of the church and enriches its meaning.[13] Traditional theology states that atonement starts a new relationship, while Williams stresses that atonement creates a new community of reconciliation. Wherever God's love heals humanity's brokenness because of the human failure to love, and wherever a community responds in repentance and faith to the Creator, Christian faith grows. Williams goes further than the traditional view of God's sacrificial giving of Godself because of human sinfulness. He sees atonement as the never-ending loving action of God to reconcile , redeem, renew, and re-establish relationship with the world and among persons.[14] The Christian community becomes the context in which persons experience the healing and transforming power of Christ's atoning act.

God's reconciliation with humankind through Jesus Christ undergirds the life of the faith community. The dynamic interplay between God's action in history and human participation in the present acts of reconciliation and in

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[13] See Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love , 188.

[14] Ibid., 181.

hoping for the future keeps the faith community in mission to individuals and society. Since God's work of reconciliation continues, so must the ministry of the church.[15] As long as human needs are unmet, and as long as pain, oppression, destructive conflicts and other social ills exist, God and the church have an ongoing task of reconciliation. God suffers in the midst of human unfaithfulness, but God is eternally faithful. God continually works with and through the church. As the church attempts to bring reconciliation and as it seeks to express itself as the covenant community, the church also attempts to bring justice wherever injustice and oppression exist.

Williams points out that through the church, people experience redemption. God's redeeming act transforms them; it does not simply remove their guilt and assure them of full reconciliation after life.[16] The experience of redemption in Christ takes place in the present. The church, the Body of Christ, manifests the continuing redemptive-reconciling work of God in Christ. God's act of love has created the church, and thus the church lives in and through the spirit of love. According to Williams, redemption in Christ is incorporation into His body, the church, and "love is the bond of the church."[17] With the vital place of the church as the context of the redemptive process, relatedness with the faith community is indispensable for discerning and strengthening responsible caring.

Williams postulates that the church and all of life and history depend upon God's redemptive act in Christ.[18] The field of force draws the creative,

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[15] Ibid., 189.

[16] See Williams, God's Grace and Man's Hope , 104.

[17] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love , 99.

[18] Williams, Essays in Process Theology , 321.

self-expressive and self-determinative person into an alive personal relationship with God in Christ. This, then, enables persons to experience God's love.

Williams' Definition and Description of the Church

To discern Williams' theological views of the church, we will examine the terms he uses for the church, in addition to exploring his concept of the atonement. Williams calls the church "the creature of the Gospel;"[19] that is, the church is a dynamic witness of God's redemptive act in Christ. The church constitutes persons who have discovered in the Gospel that which enables them to become a new people with new life in Christ. Thus, the church is created not by a sense of need or a response to social action or a call to new grouping or a philosophical rationale of its value, Williams asserts. Rather, the church is formed as a result of the two-fold continuing work of God in Christ: (1) in creating, redeeming, and healing the world, and (2) in empowering persons to experience the potent power of God's love. The personal experience of God's love through proclamation, worship, fellowship, teaching, and service invites persons in a unique way.[20] The Gospel and the church, therefore, are inseparable. The good news is that Christ gives new life, and that the community of faith belongs in God's partnership, with full rights and responsibilities to participate in God's creative and redemptive work.

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[19] Daniel Day Williams, "The Gospel and the Church," TS, n.d., p. 2.

[20] Daniel Day Williams, "The Inner Reality of the Church," TS, n.d., p. 17.

However, the Gospel which the church proclaims also judges the church itself, Williams notes.[21] This means that the church is held accountable to Christ's standards on how it fulfills its mission and what priorities it establishes. The Good News can be bad news to those who succumb to the conflicting cultural ethos. How to be faithful in love in the midst of sin and evil poses a challenge to the church. Williams states, "The church is the one community which in accepting agape as the meaning of its existence places itself squarely under the judgment of the love which seeks one redeemed humanity in the knowledge of God."[22] This is a big order. The church is not only to accept God's love, as Williams has pointed out, but rather is to live out continually God's love through acts of justice, compassion, and suffering on behalf of the oppressed.

Further, Williams describes the church as a "bearer of grace" _to_ the individual and in some sense _for_ the individual.[23] The church is not the possessor of grace, but rather a participant in grace. God in Christ has fully manifested the self-giving and forgiving love we call agape.[24] Williams maintains that God's Spirit in history has initiated grace in and through Christ. With this perspective, the church continues to rely on God's forgiving love.

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[21] Daniel Day Williams, _What Present- Day Theologians Are Thinking,_ 3rd rev. ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 191. See Williams, _God's Grace and Man's Hope_, 33.

[22] Williams, _The Spirit and the Forms of Love_, 274.

[23] Ibid., 188.

[24] Williams, _The Spirit and the Forms of Love_, 205. It should be noted that Williams recognizes other avenues of God's grace, although he claims that the church is the most essential one. See Williams, _God's Grace and Man's Hope_, 105.

The church enables individual members to share their lives, to create and renew life-enhancing relationships with one another and with the larger community. Like H. Richard Niebuhr, Williams claims that the church nurtures and makes possible the growth of faith. The present possibilities and ministries of the church provide opportunities for persons to participate meaningfully in works of love and justice.

The church exists wherever people become aware of God's atoning action of love in Christ and respond in faith and love.[25] This discovery of God's love as revealed in Christ motivates people to serve the community of faith and the larger community in love. The life-affirming relatedness in the faith community strengthens inner relatedness with the self and God and impels the faithful to reach out to the neighborhood, the society, and the global community.

Williams asserts that Jesus, through his life and ministry, prepared his group of early disciples to be the ecclesia, the people of the new covenant.[26] The covenant formed through the Incarnate Christ grounds the relationship between God and God's creatures. God's act of love, as expressed in the history of Jesus, gives the basis for love and the guide to ethical relationships. Just as Jesus treated people with dignity and compassion, so is the church called to live in such spirit.

Like the philosopher and theologian Josiah Royce, to whom he refers, Williams maintains that the church is "the community of memory and hope" rich with the past heritage of God's covenant relationship with the people

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[25] Williams, What Present-Day Theologians are Thinking, 206. See also Williams, "The Three-Fold Church," TS, n.d., p. 2.

[26] Williams, What Present-Day Theologians are Thinking, 189.

that continues to the present and is filled with future hope for those who respond to God's act of love.[27] Royce perceives the basis of the church in the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The community's remembrance of God's redemptive love in Christ and its interpretation of this event as a genuine manifestation of God's faithfulness in spite of human disloyalty lays the groundwork for the church's mission.

The Christian community remembers God's loving act in Christ and shares in that memory with repentance and celebration. The new community confesses that it has betrayed its own purpose for existence. Renewed and continually reforming, the community of memory celebrates new life and relives God's story and vision. As a community of hope, the church's life and work move towards fulfilling its vision. Believing in its agape foundation, the church tries to live up to a vision that reaches beyond its present life. The vision of the kingdom of God challenges the church to remain faithful to the covenant. For Royce and Williams, the church, then, finds meaning in genuine loyalty to Christ and in joyful anticipation of the full realization of God's kingdom.

The Universal Church

Thus, the church is called a historical, believing community because it began in the life of Jesus and his disciples. Further, the church believes that the redemptive love of God and the immanent presence of God's Spirit disclose and create the faith community.

The church as "a universal community of freedom and fellowship," Williams says, enables reconciliation to take place; no other community fully

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[27] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love, 182.

provides this.[28] Freedom, God's gift to all creatures, enables persons to express their God-given image and to choose their destiny. For Williams, freedom and communion are indispensable ingredients of love. The church empowers persons to use their freedom in the spirit of love for others. The same spirit of love characterizes the fellowship of believers. As a religious fellowship, the church gives attention to persons in all of life and makes certain that they minister to the whole person.[29] In fellowship the church is servant to all and lord to no one. Freedom suggests the capacity of the faith community members to extend the spirit of koinonia to diverse persons and groups, settings, and human conditions.

Williams stresses the universal nature of the church as one that tears down barriers of exclusiveness and denominationalism.[30] The holy catholic church, Williams implies, embodies wholeness, in that those who belong to the church manifest mercy and justice in concrete ways and in varied human settings.[31] They know their God is a God of shalom, a God of love, justice, righteousness, and freedom, who feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, and frees the imprisoned. As service to God finds visible manifestation in the ongoing life of the catholic church, the community moves closer to becoming the realm of God, yet the church never fullly attains it. The church stands firm wherever the Holy Spirit is present and the word proclaimed, and wherever faith lives on.

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[28] Williams, God's Grace and Man's Hope, 105.

[29] See Daniel Day Williams, "The Churches and the Kingdom of God," TS, n.d.

[30] See Williams, What Present-Day Theologians Are Thinking, 186-8.

[31] Williams, God's Grace and Man's Hope, 126.

Williams believes that the Christian community in its catholicity extends its arm of compassion to nonchristians.[32] The church must concretely express the meaning of God's love with people of different religious backgrounds, if we are going to live together in harmony. Williams points out that the catholic church is "transracial and transnational," in addition to being transdenominational.[33] The bonding of the faith community characterizes an accepting, reconciling, and serving church.

Williams emphasizes that the imago Dei nature of persons finds more expression in a community of faith than in other settings.[34] The faith community is essential in finding expressions of our God-given creativity and freedom and in "putting love into action." The ministries of the church provide opportunities for persons to participate meaningfully in works of love and justice. The church that manifests the quality of being "a community of life and meaning" leads persons to find their sense of purpose and values in life.[35] Since people are created in God's image, they need to make the image visible.

Christology and Ecclesiology

Williams' thinking discloses the intrinsic relationship between his Christological and ecclesiological perspectives. For him, to belong to Christ is to belong to the church; and to belong to the church is to belong to Christ, the

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[32] See Daniel Day Williams, " Basic Christian Affirmations," Christian Scholar 34 (1951) : 189-202.

[33] Williams, "The Churches and the Kingdom of God."

[34] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love, 272, 188.

[35] Daniel Day Williams, " Jesus and the Church: The Centrality of Christ," TS, n. d.

head of the Church.[36] When persons make commitmens to serve Christ, they give themselves to fulfilling the purpose and ministry of the church. He concurs with Freidrich Schleirmacher that Roman Catholicism tends to view persons' relationship to Christ as dependent upon their relationship to the church, while Protestantism stresses that persons' ties to the church depend upon their connection to Christ.[37] Williams insists that both relationships are interdependent and cannot be viewed independently. Both Williams and Schleirmacher believe that a redeemed and nurtured life is possible as persons in the community of faith respond in love to God in Christ and to one another.[38] For his ecclesiology, Williams alludes to Paul's letter to the Ephesians (2:12-15) in which Paul points out that Christ has brought the believers together, giving them hope and renewing their relationship with God.

Christ in our midst inspires and guides the human spirit. Thus the church receives its strength and power to heal, inspire, and encourage from the everpresent Christ. The real context of pastoral care is the faith community where the Spirit of God creates and renews a relationship of love to God and one another.[39] The faith community that responds to the dynamic leading of God's Spirit enables persons to grow in humility, love, and faith. In this creative and redemptive context, the liturgy becomes an alive celebration of God's act and the community's life together, and thus

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[36] See Williams, "Basic Christian Affirmations," 189-202. See also, Williams, What Present-Day Theologians are Thinking, 188.

[37] Williams, What Present-Day Theologians are Thinking, 188.

[38] Daniel Day Williams, Interpreting Theology (London: SCM, 1953), 129.

[39] Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls, 132.

strengthens the interrelatedness between persons and God in a faith community setting.

The church provides a setting in which persons gain self-understanding and awareness of others' needs, and they sustain relationships of love and hope. Williams admits that this purpose of the church is both beneficial and problematic, for the church's perception of itself and its practice reveal conflicting messages.[40] The church that manifests the fruits of the Spirit is humble, recognizes its shortcomings, and always needs forgiveness.

The members of Christ's church are one with Christ.[41] Recognizing both God's love in Christ and human sinfulness, the church responds by confession and by acts of love; thus it is a powerful witnessing and healing body of Christ. Williams maintains that human community, especially the Christian community, needs to enable its people to act with one another as persons and not as things.[42] The church serves as the arena for practicing I-Thou relationships, permeated by trust and acceptance.

Williams asserts that an understanding of the presence of the Spirit in relationships is essential to the church's theology.[43] Discernment and encounter with the Spirit invoke a sense of being members one of another and enhance the experience of freedom .

When the church listens to the Spirit, a new kind of relationship exists.[44] People recognize and accept their alienation and then participate in

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[40] Ibid., 129.

[41] Ibid., 130.

[42] Williams, What Present-Day Theologians are Thinking, 209.

[43] Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls , 127.

[44] Ibid., 130.

God's creative-redeeming act. Recognizing itself as fallible, the church continues, however, to heal and to reconcile, receiving its strength from the ever-present Christ. The church that discerns the Spirit confesses its smug self-righteous attitude and honestly resolves to live humbly and to care responsibly. The new life the church receives from the Spirit compels her to face struggles between good and evil with renewed understanding, conviction, and strength. Openness to the leading of the Spirit enables the church to make decisions based upon the demands of the Christian faith. Gratitude for the Spirit's presence and power, acknowledgment of sins, hope for continuing participation in God's work characterize the faith community that is receptive to the Spirit. Because of the new relationship with the Spirit, Williams says, the church can offer new life to the world, which is marred by increasingly destructive power, racial prejudice, hatred, alienation, hopelessness.[45]

The Spirit inspires, guides, convicts, and stirs the church. The Spirit of God's love makes possible the creation and renewal of relationships with God and one another. The human spirit reflects the image of the Holy Spirit.

Agape

Williams points out that the true Christian community lives a life of acceptance, reconciliation, and service; it is grounded in agape.[46] It lives in hope that the members will continue to grow in their commitment and compassion. Such a community exudes a warm and forgiving spirit. The life of the members is ruled, not by human law, but by God's Spirit of love.

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[45] Williams, "The Inner Reality of the Church," p. 20.

[46] Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls, 146.

Williams emphasizes the freedom of the spirit as freedom from life-negating rules, values, and laws set by society, and freedom for life-affirming values and goals. Thus, in the Christian community, love undergirds tradition, scripture, and sacramental life.

Fresh encounter with God's Spirit keeps the church vibrant and vital. Moreover, openness to formation and transformation in the encounter with God's Spirit is the way the church takes the demands of the gospel seriously.[47]

In sum, for Williams, the Christian church is a community of redemption, reconciliation, memory, and hope. The faith community continually nurtures the members in their commitment to the covenant, so that they grow in faith and in responsible caring. The Christian faith community receives new life and renews itself through God's atoning act in and through Christ. God's decisive act of love in the atonement of Christ undergirds and judges the work of the church.

Williams' emphasis on the importance of dynamic worship and meaningful congregational life concurs with the work of the religious education theorist John Westerhoff. Also, Williams' theological formulation of the meaning of the church can be clarified and strengthened by using the shared Christian praxis approach of Thomas Groome, another religious education theorist. Westerhoff's insights on the socialization-enculturation paradigm, and Groome's emphasis on the faith community's need for shared praxis illuminate and reinforce Williams' interpretation of the church as a community of relationship.

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[47] Williams, *What Present-Day Theologians are Thinking*, 191.

John Westerhoff's Contribution

John Westerhoff's primary contribution comes from his emphasis on the church as a story-formed, tradition-bearing, worshipping, and witnessing "people of God, self-conscious and intentional" in the nurture of the Christian faith.[48] He calls for intentionality in retelling and reliving God's story. He maintains that the faith community is called to act out God's story in worship together and in life in the world. Sharing our faith, weaving God's story and our personal story, and discovering the transforming power of faith all take place in a community that experiences God's story together. A faith community participates in God's creation, redemption, and liberation. With these theological views on the church, Westerhoff concludes that the church needs a paradigm for religious education that grows out of the whole community of faith rather than schooling contexts. Thus, he proposes that the church moves from the schooling-instruction paradigm to a community of faith-enculturation model for Christian education.[49] His socialization-enculturation approach to religious education recognizes the formal and informal ways persons are nurtured in discernment and lifestyle.[50] The various expressions of life in the community of faith contribute to a dynamic process of nurturing our faith and communicating an approach to life consistent with our faith.[51] This process takes place as we fully participate

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[48] John Westerhoff, Will Our Children Have Faith ? (New York : Seabury, 1976) , 52.

[49] Ibid., 51.

[50] John Westerhoff and Gwen Kennedy Neville, Generation to Generation: Conversation on Religious Education and Culture (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1974) , 38. Westerhoff, Will Our Children Have Faith?, 1.

[51] Ibid., 41-2.

in the shared life of the faith community through rituals, symbols, organizational life, and various expressions of beliefs, attitudes, and values.[52] He says that the liturgy and daily life of the Christian community undergird the authority adequate for Christian faith and life.[53]

Westerhoff enumerates essential characteristics of a Christian faith community:[54]

1. A common story and vision characterize the Christian community. God's story holds together the various parts of congregational life, goals, and ministries. The Christian community celebrates, shares, and lives God's story, and hopes for the coming of God's kingdom. The challenge to the church is to make God's story so alive and real that it illumines and transforms lives. Westerhoff proposes that in order to celebrate and live the Christian story, the faith community needs to plan for and implement programs based upon God's story and the cycle of the church year. hus, the Christian community is a story-formed and vision-directed community.

2. A common authority binds a faith community. For Westerhoff, the church's worship is formative in Christian life and work. Through genuine worship, people experience the faith. The liturgy and daily life of the Christian community convey truth that makes life meaningful.[55]

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[52] Ibid., 41.

[53] John Westerhoff, _Living the Faith Community: The Church That Makes a Difference_ (Minneapolis: Winston , 1985) , 44.

[54] See Westerhoff, _Living the Faith Community_ , 25.

[55] Ibid., 53.

Participation in worship gives Christians their identity.[56] Tradition, experience, and scripture guide the ordering of worship life.

3. A highly visible characteristic of a faith community is its common rituals.Westerhoff strongly believes that liturgical experiences are essential for Christian transformation. Westerhoff defines rituals as "repetitive, symbolic actions that express a community's myth or sacred story.[57] As symbols, they point to a meaning, and this meaning gives sustenance and vision to the members of the faith community. The ritual of worship, for example, demonstrates human dependency upon God.[58] In response to God's goodness and greatness, receptive "faithing selves" reach to God in worship .

4. Members of a faith community live a common life together. Held together in Christ, the Christian community is nurtured by a shared purpose . They gather for nurture and go out to nurture others through various forms of ministry.[59] The church, "a sacramental community," is a visible manifestation of an invisible grace and truth. As a sacramental community, the church symbolizes and lives out the gospel.

Westerhoff describes the faith community as "a community of shalom" that continuously strives to become faithful to God's vision of love, peace, justice, and liberation.[60] He points out that our "rituals, experiences in the church, and actions in the world" should be judged by how effective and

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[56] Ibid., 45.

[57] Ibid., 57.

[58] Ibid., 58.

[59] Ibid., 69.

[60] Westerhoff and Neville, 156. Also John Westerhoff, A Pilgrim People: Learning Through the Church Year (Minneapolis: Seabury, 1984) , 32.

faithful they are in integrating our story with God's story. They influence our life, in nurturing our faith so we "own" that faith, and in preparing us to move toward the shalom vision.[61] To accomplish these tasks means individual and church transformation.

Westerhoff describes the church as a mid-community placed between the family and society and its institutions. The church attempts to meet the needs of both the individuals and the institutions. For Westerhoff, the issue for the church is not simply to identify ways to help the family and state to be more humane, but to be a community which itself embodies humanizing and liberating relationships. Different groups and institutions can offer suggestions for becoming human, but the faith community has a primary role to nurture the people of God for redeeming and reconciling ministry in the world. Westerhoff believes that the liturgical life is one way to transform the people of God.

Westerhoff points out that as a pilgrim people, we are always on a journey with God through time, being empowered and sustained by the retelling and reliving of God's story.[62] He describes the enabling role of Christian education to help motivate, guide, and equip the "faithing selves" in actualizing God's story in their lives. The hope is for growth in faith among all members of the faith community. The process involves interaction through shared celebrations, liturgies and experiences of learning, caring, and social action.

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[61] See Westerhoff, " In Search of Community," Will Our Children Have Faith?, 51-78.

[62] Westerhoff, A Pilgrim People , 9.

Westerhoff emphasizes the church's important task to create an atmosphere of belonging and acceptance. He says that the Christian community may be the best place where the most unwelcome people are welcomed and the least deserving are worthy of belonging and becoming.[63] In a dynamic faith community, no one should be a stranger. The Christian community should ideally consist of nonconforming, incompatible, heterogeneous individuals and groups united by a common identity, a common story and life shared.

Williams and Westerhoff Compared

Westerhoff's views about the church and the centrality of God's story provide added insights to Williams' understanding of the church. Both Williams and Westerhoff emphasize the biblical concept of the church as the body of Christ united in God's love. Westerhoff stresses the sacramental nature of the church, while Williams stresses the redemptive and reconciling ministry of the church. Williams affirms that the church's life of sacrament and worship revitalizes relationships with God and with the world and guide persons who are searching for meaning.[64] Both affirm the traditional view that the church is "an outward and visible manifestation of an inward and spiritual reality known as grace." Williams describes the church as that reality which relates God with us and us with one another.[65]

The church, Westerhoff and Williams assert, should sensitize people to the injustices of society and challenge them to work for justice, that is, to humanize institutional structures and processes. Westerhoff emphasizes

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[63] Westerhoff, Living the Faith Community, 21.

[64] Williams, The Minister and the Care of Soul, 115.

[65] Ibid., 13.

education for responsible social justice through enculturation and the liturgical life of the church. Williams urges that the church increase persons' understanding of the interrelatedness of justice and love, especially the idea that justice is an indispensable expression of love, without which love would not fully be a reality.[66] Williams stresses the individual's responsibility to engage in God's work through the church and in the world. For both Williams and Westerhoff, the church faces the critical task to seek and act for justice. Love and justice are best expressed within the context of a faith community. If the church is to transform the world, it needs to keep moving toward shalom/salaam.[67]

Thomas Groome's Contribution

Thomas Groome, another contemporary religious educator, has also significantly influenced religious education theory. In his primary work, Christian Religious Education, he offers added insights on the concept of the church. His major contribution comes from his theory of shared Christian praxis. This approach sets the arena in which Christian education attempts to integrate the contemporary Christian life and the biblical tradition in a socio-cultural context. Groome emphasizes the lived Christian faith in a Christian community of faith, enabled by Christian education's shared praxis approach.

"Becoming Christian together," Groome claims, demands entering into and being immersed in both a socialization process and participation in a

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[66] Ibid., 245.

[67] Shalom is a Jewish word and salaam, an Arabic word for love, peace, righteousness, equality, wholeness, healing, liberation, reconciliation.

critical educational process within a Christian faith community.[68] He concurs with other social theorists about the essential role of interaction with the environment in one's becoming; the Christian's environment is the community of faith. He goes beyond the socialization approach, however, with his emphasis on heightening critical consciousness by using the shared praxis model. He critiques socialization theories as inadequate in effecting transformation and in sustaining growth in faith.

For the Christian formation of values, actions, and attitudes, Groome claims that a Christian faith community is responsible for socializing us. Groome defines socialization as "the process of being inducted" into a socio-cultural environment, which he calls "the ethos of a stable group of people," and this ethos in turn shapes our self-identity.[69] What and who we are results from the interactive life of a community, which is guided by basic common values, beliefs, and a pattern of living. He says that Christian identity is developed in the context of a community of Christian faith whereby persons engage in a mutual experience of living the Christian faith. The more intentional these communities are in genuine expressions of the faith, the greater the opportunities are for community members to reflect on and become aware of their Christian understandings and values.

In Christian socialization, we participate in the faith life of the Christian community, receive the gifts of the community members, respond to the practices, values, and beliefs of the community, and decide to accept those that we find nurturing so that we take ownership of that faith.

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[68] Thomas H. Groome, _Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision_ (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980), 108.

[69] Ibid., 110.

Groome calls these movements of socialization "externalization, objectification, and internalization."[70] He explains the process as moving from participation to responding, reacting, deciding, and acting on established socio-cultural patterns. This includes bringing into our conscious awareness what we perceive as the strengths and limitations of our community and accepting them as our own.

Groome stresses the importance of the dialectic between individual members and the Christian community, and between the community and its social context in order to enhance individual freedom and creativity and to advance constructive change in society.[71] Drawing from the Hegelian tradition, Groome describes dialectical relationship in phases, beginning with a period of affirmation (thesis) followed by a time of rejection (antithesis) and finally a period of resolution (synthesis) whereby the first two actions are blended into a coherent whole.[72] He points out that the individual affirms and accepts some patterns, structures , and processes from society and culture and rejects others. Beyond the two moments of thesis and antithesis emerges a movement that brings individual and social transformation. One's view of oneself and the world changes as a result of the dialectical relationship.

Groome claims that in order for a dialectical process to take place, a critical educational process is needed to increase individual and social consciousness. He argues that socialization by itself is insufficient for

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[70] Ibid., 110-13.

[71] Ibid., 145. Dialectic involves the stages of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. "Dialectic," Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed.

[72] Groome, 114.

maintaining Christian self-identity, for bringing about transformation in the church and society, and for furthering growth of faith.[73] In socialization, Groome says, persons learn to accept reality, which is important, but without the intentional effect of dialectical engagement and critical reflection that leads to a transforming act of knowing.[74] If the socialization process decides entirely for us, we deprive ourselves of the creativity and freedom for personal decision and control. Failure to take initiative and to decide ourselves would mean failure to change, which results in difficulty or failure to discover our own unique identity. His view underscores the need for persons to experience faith individually, and to question, dialogue, decide, and act upon what they find meaningful and faith-nurturing. He contends that shared praxis responds effectively to the need for a critical reflective process.

Groome defines shared Christian praxis as a process of sharing in dialogue in the context of a faith community; the participants critically reflect their present story and vision in light of the Christian Story and Vision.[75] The shared Christian praxis approach is Groome's response to the question of how persons can be helped to grow in lived Christian faith. He emphasizes the essential place of dialogue and the activity of sharing that is characterized by a praxis way of knowing.

Becoming Christian is a process of a relational, reflective, active knowing of oneself, God, and the world, within the context of a faith

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[73] Ibid., 114. Pages 152-75 give further exploration of Groome's perspective.

[74] Ibid., 126-27.

[75] Ibid., 184. For a full discussion of Groome's shared Christian praxis approach, see pages 184-232.

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community.[76] The shared praxis is a way of knowing that involves reflection in action; it is a dynamic process rooted in lived experience.[77] It is different from reflection that is simply followed by action, for critical reflection is a dynamic process that is rooted in lived experience.[78] Groome gives credit to John Dewey for his influential advocacy of praxis as a way of knowing and to Jean Piaget for his emphasis on cognition as a reflective process.[79] Praxis as reflective action is " a practice that is informed by theoretical reflection, or conversely, a theoretical reflection that is informed by practice."[80] Along with present action, critical reflection, and dialogue, a shared Christian praxis approach consists of the Story and the Vision. The Christian Story, which is the whole tradition of God's people who have responded to God's loving acts, guides the life of the Christian community.

In the praxis approach, participants share their personal stories and visions in relation to their present engagement in the world. They then share the Christian community Story and the Vision. Personal stories and visions and the Christian Story and Vision come into dialogue and dialectical encounter. The participants appropriate the Christian tradition and scripture to their present lived experiences. They evaluate their vision in light of the vision for a full realization of the reign or realm of God.

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[76] Ibid., 168.

[77] Ibid., 184.

[78] Ibid. , 145.

[79] Ibid., See also pages 152-75.

[80] Ibid., xvii.

Groome's paradigm provides rich opportunities for critical reflection and living the Christian faith. The call for intentional, reflective-active knowing heightens human consciousness of interrelatedness with the faith community and the larger world.

A Comparison of Williams, Westerhoff, and Groome

Groome, Westerhoff, and Williams affirm that persons grow in the Christian faith in a Christian social context. Westerhoff stresses heavily the community's role in shaping persons' views and attitudes through its shared life, such as the rituals of the faith community. We are who we are in large part because of the influence of our environment. Groome asserts that our community forms our identity but does not decide for us.[81] He contends that the individual and the community must relate dialectically to bring about constructive social transformation. All three theorists have advocated the vital place of the community in human formation and transformation. They maintain that the faith community forms our Christian beliefs, behavior, values, and goals.

Groome uses the term "lived Christian faith," Westerhoff, "owned faith," and Williams, "redeemed" to describe the results when a Christian faith community and its members live together in meaningful ways and respond faithfully to the Story and Vision. They differ, however, in that for Groome, living one's faith means an ongoing process of reflecting and reforming one's actions in light of the Christian story and Vision of God's reign. Westerhoff, on the other hand, stresses the stages people undergo before reaching an "owned faith."

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[81] Groome, 145.

Groome, Westerhoff, and Williams point out that Christian becoming is possible only within the context of a Christian faith community. Groome posits a shared Christian praxis approach that emphasizes critical reflection, while Westerhoff provides a model of faith community-enculturation, and Williams, a theological framework of the centrality of atonement, redemption, and reconciliation. Their approaches all focus on faith as a dynamic process in which persons interact within a social context.

All three of them emphasize the three dimensions of time as essential in the ongoing life and work of a dynamic faith community. Williams' description of the church underscores the creative and redemptive act of God in Christ in forming, reforming, and transforming persons. The vitality of the church rests on its experience of atoning grace through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, and also, on its experience of love made visible in present acts of ministry and caring. As a community of hope, the church moves on, expectantly waiting and working for the realization of God's kingdom of love and justice.

For Westerhoff, the past holds a more important place in the church than the present experience and the visions of the faith community. He describes the faith community as tradition-bearing, pilgrim people, liturgical people, and a community of shalom. Through he focuses heavily on the past, his emphases assume significant relationships among the past, present, and future. The faith community retells and relives the community's Story in its worship, and it hopes for the full realization of God's realm. This takes place when the faith community appropriates and enacts the traditions of the past in the present, as expressed in the liturgy. As a pilgrim people, we journey in the faith with hope for shalom to come.

Groome's shared praxis approach definitely stresses the dimensions of time in the process of doing critical reflection on present action, past stories, the Christian story, our personal visions, and the Christian community's vision. He points out that in the active-reflective activity, we critique the present, dig out the past with critical memory, and envision the future with creative imagination.[82]

All three writers call for intentionality in providing the kind of experience and education essential for individual and social transformation. Williams calls for active participation in the faith community in order to grow in love, to become more inclusive and unbiased, to discern oneself and others better in light of the Gospel. He pointedly says that the church alone can enable persons to grow in faith. Groome evokes the intentional promotion of critical consciousness in the faith community through shared Christian praxis, if we want to move toward transforming the church and society. Westerhoff, on the other hand, urges deliberate ways of making the whole life of the faith community become a context for learning, caring, sharing, covenanting, and celebrating. He argues that education should move beyond the classroom to the whole congregational life. He calls for intentionality in retelling and reliving God's story through rites, rituals and symbols, to the end that the Story transforms our stories and lives.

Williams would need both Westerhoff's enculturation paradigm and Groome's shared praxis approach to fulfill his goal that persons grow in faith and love in the Christian community. Both paradigms have a significant place in communicating and making real Williams' understanding of the church. The kind of faith community he envisions needs the critical reflection and action

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[82] Ibid., 186.

advocated by Groome and the community of faith approach of Westerhoff. For Williams, our relationship with a redeeming and grace-bearing faith community affirms and strengthens relatedness with God, and with the world.

Implications for Christian Education

The challenge for the church posed by Williams, Westerhoff, and Groome is to participate in God's acts of redemption and reconciliation, to make alive God's story in our corporate worship and daily life , and to reflect and act on the Christian community's story and vision in relation to our personal stories and visions. Their combined insights call for a radical transformation of the church. This requires more intentionality in planning and implementing the church's ministries of diakonia, koinonia, kerygma, didache, and liturgia, or service, fellowship, proclamation, teaching, and liturgy. It also demands a vision of a reconciling and caring faith community. Training and in-depth spiritual experiences will be important for church leaders in order to vitalize these ministries.

The faith community participates in redemption through its intentional service with hurting, grieving, hungry, ill, and oppressed people. Some examples of outreach ministries that vital churches have implemented include: grief support groups; participation in a covenant relationship with social agencies that work toward the prevention of hunger, poverty, and racism; mentoring programs in which adults sponsor children and youth in the church, abused women and children, orphans, refugee families, and prison inmates. Well-organized caring groups with coordinators for different geographic areas have also proved to be an effective way to bring healing and reconciliation.

The church that manifests grace, not as the possessor of grace, but rather a participant in grace, prays and serves. Service to neighbors emerges

from genuine prayer. True worship evokes a response of love for one another. As the community praises God's grace and greatness, the community also confesses and repents for failure to care and to be just. The church shares the sin of the oppressors and the sufferings of the oppressed. Being the people of the covenant and the community of shalom/salaam, the church extends its ministries to all people who desire to make meaning out of life.

Retelling and reliving God's story through symbols and ritual, which Westerhoff firmly stresses, is a crucial educational task. An experiential approach to Bible study, for instance, can allow participants to enter into the feelings and thoughts of biblical characters and relate the meaning to their present situation; this can make God's Story come alive. Life within the congregation and in the world is covenantal when God's Story and Vision are internalized and interwoven with one's own story and vision and find expressions in responsible caring.

The use of the arts is also important to enrich worship and the whole life of the faith community. Arts can provide the impetus to draw persons to an encounter with themselves, with God and with the world. The arts can touch the inner self more effectively than other avenues of communication. Singing is important in congregational worship and small group fellowships, including opportunities to learn new hymns and to practice choral responses for communion, benedictions and prayers. Also, spirituals and chants are simple, yet effective means to draw people to a sense of worship and community. Arts also become highly visible when congregations provide at least annual musical and drama presentations that involve all ages.

Meaningful worship and other vital forms of ministry that reach the deepest level of human needs result in a stronger relationship with God,

greater understanding and acceptance of oneself and others, and renewed motivation to care deeply and justly for God's creatures and the world.

The church's commitment to participate in God's creative process involves providing a balance of life in worship, biblical and theological reflection, and continuing acts of reconciliation. Those who join in the creative-redemptive work use their freedom for a renewed life in love. Further, the holistic approach demands the formation of an open, trusting community in which the members share freely their common life in Christ and graciously receive the inspiration and judgment of the gospel.

Teaching and learning in all settings and for all ages can make alive the meaning of redemption and reconciliation whenever the church faithfully engages in education. Church school teachers play a significant role in making this happen.

Williams' view of the church as the context in which faith is nurtured underscores the importance of educational praxis and theological inquiry. To express their faith, persons of all ages need varied experiences. The leadership of clergy and professional Christian educators is critical because of their theological background. There are lay persons, however, who have a broad understanding of their faith and of educational theories. These leaders need to lay the groundwork by providing sound theological and biblical bases for what they do and by selecting appropriate experiences for the congregation. Human relations skills, knowledge of how persons learn, and understanding of human development patterns are essential for effective church leadership, along with theological grounding.

Christian education needs to strengthen the process of discernment on the nature of the Christian community. Discernment is a process of centering

and reflecting on the fundamental issues and values of life.[83] It is a time to assess one's past and present actions and future direction and to relate these with one's faith. Discernment takes place in the context of our present situation and the demands of the Gospel. E. Malatesta has defined discernment as

> the process by which we examine in the light of faith and in the connaturality of love, the nature of the spiritual states we experience in ourselves and in others. The purpose of such examination is to decide, as far as possible, which of the movements we experience lead to the Lord, and to a more perfect service of him and our brothers, and which deflect us from this goal.[84]

In discernment, we become aware of our connectedness. The goal of discernment is to free us from forces that break healthy relationships and to awaken the passion in us to care responsibly for God's creations. Kathleen Fischer suggests the use of several guidelines in practicing discernment.[85] She suggests: Listen to the deepest self; affirm the needs of oneself and of others; know the difference between passivity and conformity to God's will; trust bodily, emotional, and intuitive messages in oneself; be aware of the social and cultural factors affecting a situation; be open to alternative choices; and accept change and its consequences.

Discernment is essential in making individuals and the faith community sensitive to their identity and vocation. Self-understanding comes from an encounter with the Holy, and it is vital to discernment. The faith community

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[83] See Kathleen Fischer, Women at the Well: Feminist Perspectives on Spiritual Direction (New York : Paulist , 1988), 113-32.

[84] Cited in Jerome Neufelder and Mary Coelho, eds., Writings on Spiritual Direction (New York: Seabury, 1982).

[85] Fischer, Women at the Well, 113-32.

can enable the practice of discernment by enhancing the process of self-understanding and communal relatedness.

The life and work of the faith community should fully express our identity and commitment as the redeemed, reconciled people of God. Various groups and ages from middle elementary to older adults need to engage in dialogue regarding the Christian story and vision. Groome's shared Christian praxis approach presents a valuable and practical paradigm for congregational use. The implementation of the model rests on the initiative and vision of the lay leadership and the pastor.

Shared Christian praxis reinforces the relatedness of the faith community. Genuine sharing of God's Story and Vision within the context of a faith community leads to a deeper encounter with the Creator- Redeemer-Sustainer God. Persons' honest sharing of who they are, where they are and where they hope to be can strengthen their sense of connectedness with the community of faith and their world. Participation in a faith community provides the opportunity to receive nurture for justice.

The task of Christian formation is to respond to the question of how faith is shaped. Christian education's function is to provide ways in which the learners and teachers can acquire values, behavior, attitudes, and beliefs needed for mature Christian personhood. Both the enculturation and shared praxis approaches offer useful guides to congregations tor fulfilling the task of formation and transformation. To accomplish this goal constitutes a movement toward transcendence, that is, toward an experience of reconciling and liberating love which extends from the faith community to the world. People manifest the reign of God in their nurturing of life-affirming relationships and in caring for creation.

If the church is to cultivate "the sense of eternity," as Williams puts it, or the sense of transcendence and connectedness, then church education and worship must liberate persons from self-negating forces. The scenario would look like this: From the time people enter the sanctuary they experience a sense of awe and reverence for the God of all creation, and by the time they leave they are so moved to gratitude and repentance that they choose to join God in healing and reconciling individuals and society. Similarly, children, youth, and adults who come to a teaching-learning church experience feel accepted and loved. They engage in sharing, reflection, and creative art expressions, characterized by openness, respect, and trust. They come out illumined, strengthened, and ready to live out the meaning of faith, love, and justice in the world.

In a faith community that cultivates transcendence, teaching and learning invites and encourages people to engage in critical reflection and action in relation to the Story and Vision and to relive this Story in worship and other expressions of common life. Teaching challenges and leads learners to commit themselves to the God who has initiated the new covenant, who gives life, meaning, and hope to the faith community.

CHAPTER 6

Issues and Proposals for Christian Education Theory and Practice: Roles and Relationships of Pastors, Lay Education Professionals, and Lay Teachers

Daniel Day Williams' theology poses a three-fold challenge for Christian education, namely:

1. To provide ministries to help individuals and groups to encounter and accept their inner selves, i.e., recognizing the shadow and other unconscious elements within each person.

2. To empower persons to express love concretely in acts of just caring and compassionate justice.

3. To make the church a community of redemption and reconciliation, a bearer of God's grace, where God's act of love undergirds its life and work, and the community members take seriously their task to participate fully. The challenge calls us to be so related with our inner selves and others that we become responsibly caring. All these relationships embody our relatedness with God, the transcendent and immanent Being Who creates, redeems, enhances, and sustains life.

The vision is that the church, through Christian education, will enable its people to foster intentional responsible caring through increased self-understanding, more attachment to significant causes and greater involvement in fulfilling the purpose of the faith community. The church cultivates life-sustaining interrelatedness as it meets the challenges. Because life-enhancing relatedness and caring is a primary goal of the church,

the educational ministry should make relationship with God and persons central in its curriculum, in the functions of pastors, teachers and leaders in Christian education, and in the approaches to teaching.

The last two chapters will explore several educational components, primarily the roles and responsibilities of educational leaders, teaching approaches, and curriculum guidelines. Each of these components can enhance interrelatedness and responsible caring. The presentation here will apply Daniel Day Williams' theological views to Christian education theory and practice, along with the thinking of selected theorists whose thoughts can shape and transform the educational ministry.

This chapter will examine specifically the roles and basic tasks of leaders, namely pastors, lay professionals in Christian education, lay teachers and leaders. We will explore ways to strengthen their effectiveness and faithfulness in nurturing healthy relatedness and responsible caring.

Leaders in Educational Ministry

The whole people of God are called to participate in grace, and as Williams puts it, to be bearers of grace, in a universal, redemptive, and reconciling community. Pastors, lay professionals, and lay teachers and leaders play crucial roles in leading the people and making the church the kind of faith community that Williams affirms and describes. They face the daring task of exercising leadership that initiates, motivates and guides people to live out the visions of the church. Identifying these particular leaders does not undermine the significant roles of other church leaders and the entire people of God in fulfilling the vision of life-affirming relatedness and responsible caring. People who are not considered leaders but who faithfully and unassumingly give volunteer service, have a role as important to the church as the designated leaders. Though the three leadership groups have

distinctive functions and responsibilities, they share with the rest of the congregation, common stories, purposes, and visions for their faith community. They have a common task to move toward becoming knowers of self, bearers of grace, and advocates for compassionate justice.

The working style of an effective group of lay teachers and leaders, lay professionals, and pastors is characterized by collegiality, partnership, and shared power. As the leaders uphold persons inside and outside the faith community in prayer and appreciation, they begin to reflect on the purpose of the church, which is "to increase the love for God and love for the neighbor."[1] Leadership groups become models of responsible caring and compassionate justice when they themselves become a community that nurtures self-discernment, appropriate values and prophetic caring ministries.

God's creating, redeeming, and reconciling work of love in individual lives, in the church, and in the world undergirds the work of the church leaders and the entire people of God. God has entrusted humankind in general and the faith community in particular to participate fully in increasing responsible caring and compassionate justice for God's creation. Pastors, educators, lay teachers and leaders face particularly the challenge to heighten human consciousness and to nurture three essential dimensions of the divine purpose for creation. Williams has pointed out that we have been created for "communion, significant action, and stewardship of the earth."[2]

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[1] H. Richard Niebuhr, The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry (New York : Harper, 1956) , 27.

[2] Williams, "The Uniqueness of Man." See also Williams, "The Prophetic Dimension," 139-63.

Williams' consistent theme of communion in freedom and love carries the message of the vital place of the faith community and the teaching-learning contexts in nurturing communion. These church leaders have the special responsibilities to guide and inspire the congregation in finding meaningful communion with persons within and outside the faith community, to initiate ministries of justice and liberation, and to work constructively for the care and sustenance of all creation. The movement from confining detachment to liberating attachment, from life-negating separations to life-affirming relationships does not happen without the support of a vital community. In the faith community, teaching can become a potent force in leading persons to an understanding of themselves which uncovers and enhances their relatedness with God, themselves and the world. Self-understanding can strengthen the communal partnership between God and human beings. Teaching and learning in the context of a faith community can increase individuals' capacities to perceive themselves and others objectively and to extend the sphere of relationships. Teaching aims to help persons synthesize the past and future within present moments of experience. Key church staff and volunteer leaders are responsible for providing the teaching and other forms of ministry that can enrich persons' experience of communion with the God of history, with the great saints of the past and the present, and with the ordinary people of faith.

The impact of communion is evident in the community's response to significant causes and actions, such as involvement in social justice issues. The enthusiasm and high priority of the community for justice and outreach ministry lay the groundwork for creating and nurturing a strong climate of warmth and care and a positive spirit for significant causes. Relating to persons of different colors and traditions in ways that these persons feel

accepted and trusted is in tune with Williams' call for greater ecumenicity in churches.

To develop stewardship for all creation requires a commitment to a responsible lifestyle. Assessment and change in personal and social lifestyle involves discerning the role of stewards in God's creation, as well as the implications of simple living and of discipline. Any personal change also involves a change of individual perception. The leaders of a church can encourage others to make their own commitments to live responsibly and simply, and secondly, to sensitize more people to the integrity of creation and their individual responsibility to care for and sustain the earth. Taking initiative to achieve a sustainable society demonstrates some intentionality in taking care of God's creations for the present and future generations.

The congregations' capacity to implement the visions of deeper communion, more significant actions, and stewardship of the earth relies largely on the leadership of lay volunteer teachers and leaders and ministerial staff. Unless the leaders inspire and guide the people to actualize the visions, and unless they themselves express responsible caring for each other and for all creation, the people will either fail to catch the visions or will be slow in manifesting healthy interrelatedness. The leaders' relationships set the tone for the quality of relationships among the members.

Pastors

Central and decisive to the quality of congregational life is the pastor, such as her/his perception of self, sense of vulnerability, theological and psychological orientation, and leadership skills.[3] Such assessment, however,

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[3] Harris, Stress, Power and Ministry, 9. See Richard Allan Olson, ed., The Pastor's Role in Educational Ministry (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974).

does not undercut the contribution of lay professionals and lay teachers in religious education. By virtue of their position, pastors can exercise the power to transform their congregation in a positive-constructive or negative-destructive way. Pastors decisively impact the whole church life, from setting the tone and climate of relationships to motivating the church toward growth or decline. The most dynamic churches tend to have dynamic pastors who radiate warmth and friendliness, and who preach stimulating, thought-provoking sermons. The members share the warmth with the rest of the worshipping congregation. Several other factors other than the pastors' influence need to be considered, however, in evaluating the reasons for church vitality.

The leadership, particularly of the pastor, can either assist or impede the interrelatedness of the faith community. Lay teachers and leaders, professional educators and pastors need to recognize their strengths and limitations. They need to communicate with their congregations who they are and what their visions are for the church. Congregations tend to accept and trust leaders who share their vulnerabilities, basic beliefs, and values. Recognition of limitations is a first step; and then they need to work continually to find ways that others' contributions can complement theirs. These relational guidelines are important in the leaders' relationships with one another as well as with the congregation. The pastor is important in setting a tone in which this can happen.

The person of the pastor is also important. Effectiveness in the ministry involves a strong sense of personal identity and vocation. Leaders manifest their knowledge of themselves in their capacity to understand other

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people and accept them as they are. Those who fail to unearth their repressed feelings tend to be defensive when verbal or nonverbal communication touches an unconscious part of their psyche.

Lay Professionals

Lay professionals in Christian education have provided important specialized leadership particularly in the larger churches. The contributions of lay professionals in Christian education give a strong message that the teaching enterprise of the church demands the best organizational leadership and teacher competency. The tremendous amount of time and human resources involved in identifying and developing lay leadership in the church school has led the church, particularly in the beginning of the twentieth century, to encourage more specialization in educational ministry.

One of the primary contributions of professional educators is their ability to discover, motivate, and train potential leaders and teachers. Lay professionals in religious education play significant roles as trainers of teachers, interpreters of educational goals, initiators and coordinators of the church's teaching ministry, and advocates for service projects and social justice concerns. There are pastors and lay volunteers who fulfill such roles, too. With their knowledge and skills in teaching, leading and human relationships, lay professionals can provide much-needed resourcing and training for congregations. The training of a broad range of prospective teachers is needed, including people such as grandfathers and other men, college students, persons in business and executive positions, as well as the more typically recruited mothers and public school teachers.

Lay educational staff also serve as guides. They set the tone and the style of leadership. They find and provide settings for persons in various stages of faith development to grow. Educators often have a passion for

creative person-centered teaching, undergirded by a covenantal relationship with God and a vision for social justice. Thus, they bring new hope.

Some pastors assume that retired or inactive public school teachers can become qualified Christian educators without further training simply because of their teaching experience. Perhaps, they view the work as mainly requiring organizational skills to keep the Sunday School running smoothly. This may be partly true. However, we need theologically and biblically trained educators who can enable members to become biblically literate and effective witnesses for their faith. It seems that churches, particularly large ones, have often undermined the role of professional educators through their over-emphasis on organizational skills and lesser emphasis on biblical and theological discernment.

Because everything we do and fail to do teaches, Christian educators and other church leaders face the challenge to help make the church's educational ministry meaningful. Christian education is central, not peripheral, to church life. However, for many, Christian education is secondary and exclusively for children and youth, even though the largest membership of most churches is adult.[4] This is a challenge for the future.

Lay professionals in Christian education, along with lay teachers and pastors, are linkage people of the church. They link the educational ministry with the total life of the church. As interpreters, they communicate with the congregation the vision of Christian education. They attempt to relate

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[4] A positive change is happening, however, as we enter the twenty-first century. More adults, particularly the young adults, enroll in ongoing and short-term classes today than in the past two decades, according to researcher Warren Hartman. See Warren J. Hartman, _Discipleship Trends_, United Methodist Church, June 1987.

Christian education with worship, stewardship, mission outreach, and other facets of ministry.

They link people as well. They link the clergy and the laity. As lay persons, they have a commonality with the members because they are part of the lay membership. They are also part of the staff team in a similar category as the clergy. They link also more uninvolved persons with active members of the church. In inviting people to teach and lead, they identify those who are uninvolved but have potential for teaching.

Lay professionals, along with all of the other leaders, also link traditions and ideas. They link the past with present experiences and possibilities. They link the biblical-theological foundations with psychological theory in order to minister more effectively to the whole person.

Lay Teachers and Leaders

In addition to pastors and lay professional, committed lay persons who feel deeply their calling to teach are at the heart of dynamic teaching. A national research study directed to small membership churches reveals that Sunday school superintendents and teachers are considered by pastors the most important contributors to the ongoing ministries of the small membership churches.[5] The study indicates that persons name Sunday school teachers as the people with whom they interact the most in the church. Church school teachers have a critical role in helping to bring about responsible caring in the life of the congregation and in its mission beyond the church.

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[5] Warren J. Hartman, "Research Findings on the Small Membership Churches,"United Methodist Church, General Board of Discipleship, TS, Nashville, 1975. See Afrie S. Joye, "Study Reveals Potential," Church School May 1981: 8-11.

A local church-based research conducted in eight ethnic minority churches from five United Methodist districts of Southern California shows that Sunday school teachers were the primary models for caring in their churches, and that the faith community played a key role in making it happen.[6] Most persons who taught children stated that they taught because they loved children. They described their teaching as satisfying, enjoyable, and exciting. They felt positive, because they saw children learn, and they, too, learned.

In conclusion, all educational leaders need a sense of caring and an understanding of persons and the subject matter in order to be effective. Three roles are particularly significant for leaders of the church who wish to strengthen interrelatedness and caring. The roles are basically adapted from Erik Erikson's concept of the roles of the generative adult, which are discussed in an earlier chapter, namely, the servant leader, prophet, and teacher-evangelist.

The Role of Servant Leadership

The Concept and Qualities of Servant Leadership

Williams has repeatedly stated in his writings the indispensable place of servanthood in Christian vocation. The word servant carries the connotation of being subservient and weak. On the contrary, servanthood is a symbol of strength, for great leaders have emerged by the path of servant leadership. Robert Greenleaf, author of the book _Servant Leadership_, says

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[6] Afrie Songco Joye, "Church School Teachers as Primary Models for Caring in Ethnic Minority Churches," TS, 20 Nov. 1985. Eight minority local churches with seventeen respondents from five districts in the Southern California area of the California-Pacific Conference, The United Methodist Church, participated in the research. On-site interviews were conducted with the teachers, individually and in groups.

that great leaders are seen as servants first. They "bend their efforts to serve with skill, understanding, and spirit."[7] Servant leaders have the competence to lead and the willing spirit to serve and follow. Servant leaders guide persons toward a common goal persuasively, not coercively, in the spirit of responsible caring and humility. Servant leadership includes the tasks of creating, recreating, healing, and redeeming. Servant leaders shape and reshape their world, and they are willing to be shaped by their world.

Servanthood and ministry are closely related, based upon the gospel narratives. The biblical foundations for servant leadership come from Jesus' words, "For even the Son of man did not come to be served but to serve, . . ." (Mark 10:45 NEB) Some translations use"minister" (verb) for "serve." To serve or to minister is to reach out to persons at their point of need.

True servanthood evokes response; people follow.[8] Servant leaders know how to follow, so lay teachers, professional educators, and pastors who are effective leaders need to know how to follow as well as how to lead. Servant leaders guide and enable persons to become servant leaders themselves. Servant leaders have less need to be in control of everything and everybody. A part of the problem of authoritarian leaders is often the need for self-acceptance and affirmation of others, and the need to be perceived as a leader. They perceive authority as controlling, perhaps coercive at times, rather than persuasive.

Servant leaders have the confidence to delegate authority and allow others to lead; they have the capacity to decide when to use authority and

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[7] Robert Greenleaf, Servant Leadership : A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness (New York: Paulist, 1977), 7, 4.

[8] Ibid., 29-30.

when to release or lessen control of leadership.[9] Such maturity entails a sense of security and self-esteem in their identity as persons created in God's image and called to the ministry. They are aware of the members' expectations of them, and they have some understanding of their members' thoughts and feelings. They are not threatened by the congregation's innovative approaches, unexpected responses, and initiatives. Servant pastors challenge and involve the members in various forms of ministry.

Servanthood requires openness to criticism, to the unpleasant, the unexpected, the inevitable, the ambiguities. It demands the capacity to take risks and to be vulnerable. While it is easy to accept the known, the expected, and the good, servant leadership moves beyond those comfortable, predictable modes of living and into areas that sometimes are muddled and chaotic.

Servant leadership involves suffering.[10] Suffering may take the forms of rejection, or of being misunderstood or ignored. Pastors must be willing to suffer to fulfill their vocation of guiding the faith community in becoming faithful to the Gospel and effective in servant ministry to the world. From the Christian perspective, suffering and servanthood are not self-debasement. Rather, they affirm and maintain life and foster responsible

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[9] See James Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead, _The Emerging Laity: Returning Leadership to the Community of Faith_ (New York: Doubleday, 1986). The Whiteheads' exploration of the characteristics of leadership and the cycle of empowerment emphasizes servanthood and the exercise of authority that are undergirded by the witness of Christ. See also Donald E. Messer, _Contemporary Images of Christian Ministry_ (Nashville: Abingdon, 1989). Messer examines the images of ministry, which demonstrate that servant leaders can both lead and follow, as well as know how and when to use power. He says, "The authority of a Christian minister is not undermined, but confirmed by servanthood" (110).

[10] Christ exemplified servanthood in his life, suffering, and death.

caring. Christ's ministry is a primary model. With the giving of himself, he brought new life and hope. Jean Valjean in <u>Les Miserables</u> faced persecution when he committed himself to care for Cosette and her friend as they became involved in a group that fought for their country's freedom. His ministry brought meaning to these persons' lives. People who work for social justice and against hunger and poverty have often suffered as they ministered. Their ministry has strengthened rather than weaken their selfhood.

Servant leadership requires the capacity to respect persons as they are. Servant leaders accept persons as they are, and help nurture them, so they can develop their God-given image of compassion and care. They have the capacity to form and maintain healthy relationships with people.

Servant leaders are counselors and mentors. Pastors can help the congregation evaluate events in their personal lives and in the church's life, and can guide spiritual growth and understanding. Intuition, which involves the ability to perceive the possibilities of the positive and the negative in persons and situations, is a psychological quality that pastors need to sharpen. This is the ability to discern the direction and the rests in persons' spiritual journeys. For Jung, intuition is "the function of unconscious perception" and "is represented in consciousness by an attitude of expectancy, by vision and penetration.[11] Jung says that generally, women tend to show more the intuitive capacity "in the social sphere" than men, while men tend to show more the capacity to see "the actual" and the objective more than women.[12] In order to move toward maturity and

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[11] Jung, <u>The Portable Jung</u>, 220.

[12] Ibid. , 224, 215- 20.

wholeness, women need to enhance their rational and logical power; while men need to strengthen the intuitive aspect of their personality. Leaders should be aware of their own personality tendencies; these can help them in serving and leading. They should enable their people to cultivate their less strong psychological functions and to strengthen their weak qualities so that they become life-affirming.

Servant leaders are vulnerable. To live in community automatically makes us vulnerable. Our lives become open, and others see who we are. Pastors and professional church educators particularly risk vulnerability simply because the nature of their ministry calls for servanthood. The more trusting they are, the greater they are able to accept risks and the more vulnerable they can become.

In his book, In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership, Henri J. M. Nouwen describes the servant leader as praying, vulnerable, and trusting.[13] These three descriptions tend to counteract the cultural perceptions of a leader, which for Nouwen are the temptations to be relevant, popular, and powerful. The temptation for great leaders is to cater to the ethos of society. Responding to what people want brings power and popularity. The power in servant leadership comes, however, from a trusting, faithful relationship with the divine Being. The divine-human connection is strengthened by the transforming act of prayer. Servant leaders tend to overcome temptations if they focus on life-affirming service and motives of leadership that undergird faithfulness to the Creator-Redeemer.

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[13] See Henri Nouwen, In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership (New York: Crossroad, 1989).

In summary, leaders foster relatedness and caring when they maintain and deepen a life of trust with themselves, God and the world. This is done with a spirit of prayer, a sense of vulnerability, and an acceptance of suffering.

The Enhancement of Servant Leadership

An essential ingredient for the nurture of servant leadership is self-understanding. Self-understanding involves the following tasks: facing our shadow; accepting and valuing our own uniqueness; sharing our gifts; being open to share our deep hopes and needs; taking more risks to achieve our goals; believing in the ability of other people to lead and control; finding one or more primary groups within the faith community; enhancing and sustaining personal growth disciplines; and participating in therapeutic professional development programs must be given priority .

Leaders need to keep growing in understanding and accepting themselves as persons. As Williams says, self-understanding evokes responses that reflect an awareness of our own world. When we understand ourselves, we become aware of our strengths and our growing edges. The more we know about ourselves, the more aware we are of our competencies and weaknesses. The greater self-understanding we have, the greater our endurance and tolerance is to face mounting demands and conflicts.[14]

Individuation expresses, as Jung puts it, "a successful adaptation to the universal conditions of existence coupled with the greatest possible freedom for self-determination."[15] To find freedom from life-negating

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[14] See Harris, Stress. Power and Ministry , 178.

[15] Carl G. Jung, The Development of Personality : Papers on Child Psychology. Education. and Related Subjects , vol. 17 of Collected Works , ed. Herbert Read, et al., trans. R.F.C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1934), 171.

forces, we must recognize and accept ourselves for who we are. We develop our potentials in the process of entering the unconscious and bringing the unconscious elements into relationship with the conscious or known part of us. For Jung, this goal involves heightening our individual consciousness, bringing to light our strengths and weaknesses; coming to terms with our persona, shadow, and other archetypal images; and reconciling the opposing traits within us.[16] He points out that conscious acceptance of and reconciliation with the unconscious elements involve the difficult task of avoiding a complete identification with the unconscious parts.[17] The inability to disentangle from the unconscious results in their control of our lives and the loss of our identity. The unconscious contents, however, have potential for positive results in us. Sometimes, the persona of ministers and church leaders overpower them so intensely that they tend to lose their true personhood. Self-acceptance involves cultivating a clear self-identity and continually recognizing and accepting the unconscious elements within the self.

To accept the self is to value the self. To accept others is to value them for who they are, rather than for the amount of money they give to the church or the level of emotional-moral support they give. In so valuing

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[16] For Jung, the persona is what each of us assumes to be and to do with others; it is a "compromise between individuals and society as to what a man (and women) should be." Jung describes the shadow as that of the "personal and collective psyche which contradicts our conscious attitude and disposition." The anima is the unconscious feminine side of men, and the animus is the masculine image in women. These are all located in the unconscious. Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections, 391,397-98.

[17] Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections, 326.

others, you bear grace to them. Participating in love also means discovering the gifts of others and enabling them to use those gifts creatively.

A sense of vocation enhances the practice of servant leadership. Pastors and church educators need to keep reminding themselves that they are in a vocation and a profession (one who professes). Professionalism tends to overemphasize competence, while vocation stresses both faithfulness to God's love and competence. Faithfulness demands servanthood. Servant leaders who follow the ministry of Jesus work to serve rather than to be served.

Church leaders can strengthen servanthood ministry with the use of the imagination. Imaging significant religious symbols and images of servanthood found in biblical stories and in the stories of the great saints of the church can enhance servant leadership. Stories have the power to shape thoughts, feelings, will, and actions; thus, they have power to transform conscious and unconscious reality. The use of the arts, like storytelling, can be an effective medium to enhance the imagination and ministry.

Servant leaders speak and act on behalf of the oppressed, suffering people. Our relatedness with all creation demands that we accept some responsibility for the suffering of others and suffering in the world. As the Native American saying goes, we should wear the moccasins of another to show that we are with them, that we understand, accept, and support them in their struggle for liberation and justice. Less verbal instruction and more actual demonstration generally receive a more positive response. Giving responsibilities to others while ignoring or rejecting one's own responsibility tends to create divisiveness and mistrust between the leader and congregation.

Leaders need to help persons strengthen healthy relationships built on trust with the divine being, the self, and the world. Our basic personality function, according to Jung's concept of psychological types, shows that men tend to focus on work, and women, on relationships.[18] With a growing working force of women, the dynamics and focus are changing, although the psychological type-tendencies may still exist. To help balance the two important functions, the faith community, through the leadership of the laity and the pastors, should provide opportunities for men to foster deep, life-sustaining relationships, and for women to strengthen work skills like management, negotiations, and making contracts. For example, teaching-learning settings like retreats should be encouraged for spiritual enrichment, intellectual stimulation, information gathering, reflection, and community building. Participation in communication, relational skills, and management workshops and in team building exercises can benefit both women and men.

God's people should be open to life-sustaining growth. The practice of spiritual disciplines prepares and helps equip them for faithfulness. The disciplines of meditation, contemplation, prayer, and scripture study are essential to enhancing relatedness with the Spirit and with the earth. Educators need to be cautious not to allow administrative responsibilities to dominate their work. Many times educators spend so much time recruiting teachers that they neglect to nurture themselves and others in spirituality.

A prayerful life characterizes servant leaders. Williams points out the essential place of prayer in the Christian life. An effective servant leader lives a life of prayer. Leaders must cultivate the personal and communal

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[18] See Jung, Psychological Types. See also Jung, The Portable Jung, 178-269.

prayer life of their congregations. How typical it is in church committee meetings to ask the pastor to lead in prayer. I have heard members who have been asked to pray and who have said no; then they add, "Ask the minister." An adult study group of a large-size church reflected together on the questions,"Why do we pray? Why don't you want to pray?" The discussion is a good springboard for leaders to teach persons to pray. They should set the model of living a prayerful life.

The leadership group that cares deeply without making others dependent and powerless is secure, sensitive to needs and to the Spirit's leading. Caring that leads to a blossoming of the cared-for, a rediscovery of their gifts, and a motivation to create meaning for their lives is responsible and responsive to God's purpose for creation.

To engage the people in action-reflection and in ongoing dialogue on the meaning of faith for their lives is a vital leadership responsibility. Initiating Thomas Groome's praxis approach and inviting key leaders to lead their own reflection groups is an important task of the leaders. In the shared praxis model, the participants share in a climate of trust the dynamic story of God's action of love in history, their own present story; and they dialogue on what and how God's and their vision of the full realization of the kingdom of love can be fulfilled.

Some disciplines for personal growth include:[19]

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[19] For additional insights on disciplines for spiritual formation, see Nouwen, The Way of the Heart, and Peterson, Working the Angles. Two other resources on spirituality, particularly for church leaders, have been written by Iris Cully and edited by James Michael Lee. See Iris Cully Education for Spiritual Growth (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984) and James Michael Lee, ed. The Spirituality of the Religious Educator (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1985).

1. Journal writing and journal keeping, in which the meanings of significant events and interactions. Journal keeping helps us to get in touch with the deepest level within each of us.

2. Meditation (from the Latin root "medi," in the middle of, and "stare," to stay in), which refers to centering, getting in the center of our being. To meditate means to focus our whole being on the Source of creation and on the gift of our own life.

3. Contemplation and prayer.

4. Participation in the gathered community of worship.

The work of the pastors, professional educators, lay teachers and the rest of the people of God calls for the embodiment of servant leadership.[20] The ministry of Christ is characterized by servanthood, and so should be ours.

The Teaching-Evangelistic Role

Another significant role of church leaders is the teaching-evangelistic role. A teacher-evangelist communicates the message of the Gospel, which is God's love and the need for human response to participate in God's acts of love. The primary goal of teachers and evangelists in the educational ministry is similar; their approaches may differ.

The result of a national survey by a denominational board conducted for pastors shows that the highest rated priority that local church pastors prefer for their continuing education is the educational ministry.[21] A survey

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[20] For an added perspective on the role of the pastor as servant, see Earl E. Shelp and Ronald Sunderland eds., The Pastor as Servant (New York: Pilgrim, 1986).

[21] J. Richard Yeager, "Needs Assessment for Continuing Education," United Methodist Church, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, TS, Nashville, August 1984. The finding shows that 57.6 percent of the 1783 pastors who responded from across the United States were interested in doing continuing education in education ministry. Those pastors felt most

in the California-Pacific Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church indicated that clergy and lay respondents considered evangelism and education the two highest priorities for church growth and vitality.[22] A Catholic Church study shows that bishops and priests agree that effective parish religious education is needed to help people grow in the faith and into Christian maturity.[23] The surveys disclose the significant place of education in the life of the church and the crucial role of pastors as teachers.[24] Respondents expected the pastors to be "catechist, teaching elder, and instructor in matters of faith."[25]

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lacking in educational ministries and thus wanted to improve their ministry through continuing education in the area of Christian education.

[22] Jack Tuell, " A Visit with You: Bishop's Corner," Circuit West, 10 May 1985: 1. A report on some results of Bishop Jack Tuell's series of meetings in the California-Pacific Conference shows that evangelism emerges clearly as the first priority in seven of the eight districts, and education as the second most urgent priority in six districts. The questionnaires were filled out during district meetings.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has given priority for education for five years in the 1980s with the development of new curriculum resources and has adopted evangelism and social justice as the priorities for 1990-95. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) General Council, General Assembly Minutes , June 1984 and June 1989.

[23] J. Stephen O'Brien, An Urgent Task: What Bishops and Priests Say About Religious Education Programs (Washington, D.C: National Catholic Educational Association, 1988). For a summary of findings and recommendations, see the section "Conclusions," 43-7. Effective parish religious education, according to the study, consists of programs that have the four-fold dimensions of Catholic education: "message, worship, service, and community; and these are communicated or implemented with zeal, clear vision, persistence, and good leadership." Stephen O'Brien, 43.

[24] Since the Sunday School movement became a dynamic part of church ministry in the late eighteenth century, pastors have served as inspirers, information givers, and spiritual guides. See William Kennedy, The Shaping of Protestant Education (New York : Association Press, 1966), 59. Like the Protestant churches, the Catholic Church recognizes that priests/pastors have overall responsibility for church/parish programs, including religious education. See O'Brien, 45.

[25] Ibid., 59.

A dilemma that many pastors and other teachers and leaders face is their expressed lack of teaching skills and lack of time to teach and to reach out to the inactive and the unchurched.[26] Pastors can help resolve the problem, however, by practicing better time management and taking continuing education training in Christian education praxis. For example, the time for hospital visits, administrative functions, and sermon preparations of pastors should be planned to allow some time for pastoral teaching. The need is for judicatories and dioceses to offer courses on the effective use of time. Moreover, pastors must be encouraged to take continuing education courses on effective teaching and learning, and pastors can learn to include pastoral teaching in everything they do.

Pastors, professional educators, and lay teachers who are effective teachers usually become competent guides and counselors.[27] They develop an increasing knowledge of themselves, their students, teaching goals, and methods. Their experience of God's love undergirds their knowledge and relationships. Self-respect enables these church leaders to respect the abilities and integrity of others.

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[26] Many members tend to demand too much of the pastors' time, particularly with pastors serving medium-sized churches. Many mid-size churches have one pastor. The pastor feels the need for an additional program staff, but many mid-size churches cannot afford to hire another pastor or lay professional in education.

[27] Many educators claim that effective teachers know how to listen, affirm, empathize, and develop rapport. These qualities are essential for becoming competent counselors. Researchers on the theories and practice of counseling, such as Donald Blocher, C. H. Patterson, Harold Pepinsky, and Edward Bordin, concur that inasmuch as counseling is learning and people can be taught, a source of effective counseling is the adaptation of teaching-learning principles to human development. Their findings infer the relationship between teaching skills and counseling behavior. Clyde A. Parker, ed., Counseling Theories and Counseling Education (New York: Mifflin, 1968), 11-16.

Healthy relationships are critical in fulfilling the role of teachers-evangelists. The formation and maintenance of good relationships reveal a leadership strength.[28] A national finding reveals that 75 per cent of the young clergy respondents expressed needs in human relations and interpersonal conflict skills.[29]

To help increase their effectiveness as teachers-evangelists, church leaders must develop an increasing sensitivity to individual personalities, abilities, and needs. Effective leaders grow in awareness that persons are in various stages of development and thus respond differently to their world. They need to avail themselves of the opportunities to take seminars and workshops on interpersonal skills and teaching methods. Pastors tend to forego attending continuing education courses in such areas. The church body that is responsible for ministerial continuing education should require pastors to enroll in courses that show a balance of subject matter, including Christian education. Local churches should be generous in giving time off to their pastors and professional educators for continuing education and not consider the time as vacation.

Since teaching is relational, and healthy relationships are built on trust, teaching must be built on trust. Pastors and lay professional educators must establish mutual trust with their congregations. The new pastor in a church in Charleston, South Carolina, started his first meeting in the Administrative Board with a statement of who he was. He shared three things with the group: (1) his confession that he is Christian, which means that Christ is Lord

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[28] Richard A. Hunt and Joan A. Hunt, _Called to Minister_ (Nashville: Abingdon, 1982), 59.

[29] William Behrens, "Packing the Survival Kit," _Alban Institute Action Information: For and about Religious Systems_, Jan. 1980 : 9.

and he is His servant; (2) his belief in tithing, to express his stewardship; and (3) his outlook that life is too short to hold grudges and resentment; and thus, we need to allow healthy thoughts and feelings to come in and stay.

With the testimony, the pastor disclosed some of his basic beliefs. As the pastor shared more about his values, vulnerabilities, and hopes for the church, the people started sharing their own stories. The church leaders discovered during those years that the pastor was a spiritual leader and teacher whom they could trust. The pastor's honesty opened the door for trusting relationships. In a few months, he started the 1,000 club, for those who gave $1,000 or more in tithes and pledges. Several young adults, particularly the men, joined. The newly established trust highly motivated participation. The pastor expressed deep interest in people's work and hobbies. He visited them in their workplace. Some of those persons with whom the pastor ministered became primary decision-makers of the church and strong witnesses for their faith in the church and community.

Pastors, professional educators, and lay persons who are effective teachers are willing and able to share their vulnerabilities. It is not a sign of weakness to feel vulnerable and to confess mistakes or ignorance. Leaders need to accept the reality of their lack of knowledge on certain issues and topics and not pretend they know something that they do not. Honesty may be difficult to apply, but to practice honesty pays off in terms of the resulting trust, respect and integrity from the people.

If beliefs reveal who we are, then pastors and lay education professionals need a sound theology that finds expression in responsible caring. They communicate their theology in various ways, e.g., through preaching, teaching, and informal relationships. They need to articulate their basic theological views, and to initiate reflection and dialogue. For example,

an informal teaching setting in a church can take place around a dining area during a "chat-and-chew" gathering of young couples. Pastors and lay educators can initially develop a sense of rapport with the group as they disclose themselves, their hopes for the church, and as they enable the group to share their commonalities and to ask questions about faith, life, death, and other things that matter to them. A sense of trust enhances the opportunity to articulate one's theology and opens the door for genuine dialogue .

Those who teach effectively are people who are open to learn. One of the assumptions of church vitalization made by an interdenominational research center for church development is that most pastors who are willing to learn really learn.[30] They are receptive to new ideas, new discoveries, and new skills. A congregation that encourages its pastor to learn and to participate in the learning process contributes to the pastor's effectiveness and to the church's revitalization.

One of the important roles of the people of God that has not been given enough attention is that of evangelist. An evangelist is someone who communicates the message of love, hope, and faith that Christ preached, taught, and lived. Sensitivity to the human predicament and God's active work in history compels pastors and lay educators to do evangelism. Pastors and lay leaders should sharpen their skills in doing evangelism, particularly those in the mainline tradition. A national finding of a mainline denomination reveals that evangelistic and mission outreach to people who do not belong to a faith community, or who have become inactive, is a low priority to the

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[30] Paul M. Ditterich, ed., Clergy Growth and Church Vitalization (Naperville: Center for Parish Development, 1979), 43.

clergy and laity.[31] The last two decades of continuing membership decline in many mainline denominations attests to the need for more evangelistic effort by the congregation, with motivation from the leadership group. The people should be clear about a theology of evangelism; and the leadership team should find a process that they can work with, give priority time to training a core group of laity, and have an annual plan of action and implementation to reach out to persons who are inactives, visitors, dropouts, or unchurched.

The leaders need to explore informal and personal pedagogical tools. The typical seminary teaching methods of biblical exegesis, lecture and discussion need to be broadened to include more in-depth personal reflection, and sharing of common experiences, traditions, and hopes.[32]

Teaching and evangelistic outreach must extend to the world, beyond the walls of the institutional church, if church leaders are to respond to the leading of the Spirit and be faithful to their calling. The context of ministry is the world where God's works of creation, redemption, and reconciliation occur. Teaching and learning must embody what God is doing and how God's people can fit into God's work. The doing of evangelism must arise from a discernment of God's dynamic work of grace.

The Prophetic Role

The prophetic function of God's people is to communicate the story of faith and enable persons to reinterpret the historic faith tradition. They

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[31] Pastors and lay professionals in the United Methodist Church who were selected randomly from various sections of the country participated in the survey. The questionnaire, prepared and distributed by the author and adapted from Donald Smith's Congregations Alive, was conducted in 1989.

[32] Pastors must be required in seminaries to take one or more courses in Christian education, mission, and evangelism. Seminaries are responsible for providing courses that will prove beneficial to churches.

proclaim God's ongoing action of grace in history and in the world and call the people of God to join God in the creative and redemptive work. The leaders are called to be in the forefront in proclaiming three messages:

1. They are called to share the vision of the kingdom of God coming to its full realization. They are to speak with clarity, conviction, and courage God's act of love in Christ and God's hope for all people.

2. They are summoned to communicate God's judgment, a judgment of love. This task demands the sensitivity of pastors to immediate and long-term social needs. They need to communicate that God's judgment of love is not coercive and revengeful, but rather persuasive and compassionate.

3. Pastors need to communicate hope. A call for metanoia, which is a call for conversion, embodies a message of hope. People get a glimpse of the vision every time transformation takes place in their lives.

In these kinds of communication, prophetic leaders should be open to rejection and to dealing with persons' grief and rage.

An important function of prophetic lay teachers, pastors and lay educators is to guide people in their faith journey so that they form a clear sense of who they are and where they are going. For Daniel Day Williams and Richard Niebuhr, a rediscovery of a sense of purpose includes an awareness of the church's mission and a serious attempt to live out that mission, which is, to grow in the love of God and neighbor.[33] A national research study conducted with a select group of lay and clergy in one denomination shows that a primary goal of the church is to rediscover a sense of purpose and identity.[34] A key task is to redefine and clarify the church's purpose for

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[33] H. Richard Niebuhr, The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry, 27.

[34] See Alan Waltz, Images of the Future (Nashville: Abingdon, 1980). The data came from four sources: (1) 133 respondents that included a wide

existence. Pastors and lay leaders should continually heighten the awareness in their congregations of covenant relationship, and the covenantal responsibilities. Their teaching should remind the people of the prophetic function as the whole laos .

The laity and pastors as prophets do not have to speak all the time. They need to remain silent at times and listen to people's cries and shouts of joy and pain. As teachers they are guides, assuring their fellow travelers that they are all together in the journey and that they have a map of suggested direction.[35] Spiritual guides encourage, support, and nudge the travelers. They leave open the door for persons to continue in their spiritual journeys in the midst of hurdles and pulls from different directions. They suggest ways to respond to God's Story and vision of shalom and salaam.

Responsibilities and Recommendations

In sum, the leaders and the whole people of God are called to foster life-sustaining relatedness and caring. This leads to some specific recommendations for their work.

Enhancing A Sense of Wonder and Hope

To enhance relatedness and responsible caring, lay teachers, professional educators, and pastors should enhance a sense of wonder, joy,

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representation of individual interests, experiences, and perspectives within the United Methodist Church (UMC); (2) annual conference directors of Council on Ministries, selected local church pastors, and lay persons with local church and conference leadership ; (3) a Harris public opinion poll to find non-United Methodist's attitudes and opinions regarding the United Methodist Church; and (4) William Ramsden's review of the socioeconomic, demographic, and other national trends and their possible effects on the UMC. The national research was conducted by the General Council on Ministries, The United Methodist Church.

[35] Mary Elizabeth Moore, Education for Continuity and Change: A New Model for Christian Religious Education (Nashville: Abingdon, 1982), 132.

hope, and a sense of the moment in their teaching. A sense of the transcendent and immanent Presence begins with a sense of awe and wonder.and reverence for the Source of life. These emotions give persons the urge to learn, to discover, and to worship. Reconceptualist and educator Philip Phenix defines wonder as "the suspenseful tension of consciousness toward the unknown future in response to the attraction of unrealized potentialities. . . . Awe is the sense of momentousness excited by the experience of transcendence."[36] Religion starts when we marvel at creation and feel the Mystery, the Creator-Redeemer. A faith community that cultivates people's sense of awe, wonder, and hope provides a sense of transcendence and eternity that Williams points out as a goal of the church.

The New Testament church grew in vitality that started from experiencing the Presence in and through the life and teachings of Jesus. The early followers of Jesus expressed amazement at his humble and compassionate ways of ministering to people's needs. As a result of their relationship with Him, they grew in their faith. The Israelites saw signs of God's wondrous works. They were in awe and reverence when God manifested faithfulness. Their sense of wonder and gratitude moved them into an act of faith. The early disciples' life with Jesus shows that many times they experienced transcendent moments. They lived with the One whose faith in God's faithfulness and hope for God's kingdom of love remained firm, certain and unchanging in the midst of ambiguities and ambivalence.

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[36] Philip Phenix, "Transcendence and the Curriculum," Curriculum Theorizing: The Reconceptualists, ed. William Pinar (Berkeley: McCutchan , 1975), 332. See also Mary Elizabeth Moore, Education for Continuity and Change , 144-5.

Question-posing and offering alternatives and variety of relevant experiences can enhance wonder and hope. Education theorist Maxine Greene says, "Teachers stimulate an awareness of the questionable, aid in the identification of the thematically relevant, beckon the everyday."[37] Effective teachers ask questions creatively and stimulate curiosity. They tell stories imaginatively and vividly. They offer choices for individual and group activities. Teaching involves resistance to giving pat answers but allowing students to discover for themselves the answers and the mysteries. It guides the learners to find meaning and hope through their learning environment.

As persons experience a sense of wonder, awe, and reverence for the Source and Sustainer of life, they come to trust the transcendent Being. The transforming experience motivates persons to discover and to worship. Hence, effective teachers and leaders provide ways to cultivate the emotive experiences of persons in all ages. They begin to embrace trust and hope in God as they respond to the realities and mysteries of creation, even some of the fearful realities and mysteries.

Teachers who genuinely communicate their faith help create an awareness of the world. They sensitize their students to how persons learn and feel pain and joy. A teaching method that can prove effective is dramatization. Students reflect on the feelings of the various characters and act them out. Further, teachers can help create a sense of joy and hope. One way they do this is by appreciating the moment and feeling the wonder of being alive. Another way is by feeling positive about learning itself, with its struggles, pains, rewards, and accomplishments. Teachers share joy and hope

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[37] Greene, 315.

to learners when they recognize and affirm transcendent qualities and provide opportunities that enhance those qualities in persons and in the faith community.

One way to keep the sense of hope alive is for teachers to remind themselves of the words from the scriptures: "Hope returns when I remember this one thing: The Lord's unfailing love and mercy still continue, Fresh as the morning, as sure as the sunrise. The Lord is all I have, and so in him I put my hope" (Lamentations 3 TEV).

Cherishing Others

One other important task of teachers and of all the people of God is to cherish the learners. The obvious manifestations of our cherishing are the positive feelings the cherished persons have toward themselves and their world. To cherish is to value; it is more than to accept. Cherish is "to hold dear: feel or show affection for; to keep or cultivate with care and affection: nurture."[38] To be cherished is to feel unique and special, not because of what we do but simply because we are alive and are here in one other's presence.[39] Cherishing is seeing the other person as real. It is sensing the uniqueness of the other and valuing it. It is focusing on the strengths, showing sensitivity to feelings and needs, putting ourselves in another's place, seeing the wonder and miracle of the other. To enhance the act of cherishing, teachers need to accentuate the positive in persons and situations. They need to be hopeful. This means that they must have faith in

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[38] "Cherish," Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed.

[39] See Dorothy Corkille Briggs, "The Safety of Being Cherished," Our Child's Self-Esteem: The Key to Life (Garden City : Doubleday , 1970).

their own creativity as persons and teachers and in the students' innate ability "to make and remake, to create and recreate."[40]

Cherishing gets lost when we are preoccupied with our own personal agenda, when we look at the negative, when we habitually attend to what is missing, when we do a task for the wrong reasons and when we project our lack of self-acceptance and insecurity onto others.[41]

Nurturing the Imagination

The faith community and its leaders have a vital task of cultivating the imagination of persons. They must tend the inner rainbow, that is, deepen the imagination in themselves and in others in order to enhance interrelatedness. Kathleen Fischer receives the credit for the use of the term "inner rainbow" to refer to the imagination.[42] Fischer says that just as the rainbow is the mythic symbol for a bridge connecting heaven and earth, so is the imagination the bridge that links God with humanity and the world, the sacred and the secular.[43] Further, the rainbow symbolizes God's faithfulness and the promise of new life. The imagination has the power to bring possibilities and hope. She points out that the imagination is central in the Scripture, spirituality, prayer, morality, our image of self and our images of God. Thus, to minister effectively, we must tend our inner rainbow.[44]

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[40] Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, trans. Myra Bergman. Ramos (New York: Seabury, 1970), 63. Quoted in "Education as Liberation," Religious Education and the Future, ed. Dermot A. Lane (New York: Paulist, 1986), 147.

[41] Briggs, 92.

[42] See Kathleen R. Fischer, The Inner Rainbow: The Imagination in Christian Life (Ramsey, N. J.: Paulist, 1983).

[43] Ibid., 6.

[44] Ibid., 153-67.

We need to stretch the imagination of the individual and the faith community. Imagination is "a perceptual power that involves the whole person, that puts him(her) in contact with the ground of his (her) being."[45] The imagination has an essential human quality; thus it holds a significant role in enhancing the quality of life of both the male and the female.

The imagination is essential to the Christian faith. [46] Significant religious symbols give access to meanings that are necessary for the formation and transformation of faith.[47] The imagination provides images, symbols, and stories that guide persons in their faith journey. These stories and symbols shape an essential part of the process. Images of Christ's servant ministry and the stories of individual acts of caring and its influence on others, for example, tend to evoke the decision to care.

All the educational components and the various dimensions of relatedness need the imagination to enhance responsible caring. Teachers directly relate with their students and pastors and with the congregation; they face a greater responsibility to enhance the imagination of the community members. The imagination illumines thoughts and gives novelty and freshness to religious education theory and practice.[48]

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[45] James Macdonald, "Transcendental Developmental Education," Heightened Consciousness, Cultural Revolution, and Curriculum Theory , ed. William Pinar (Berkeley: McCutchan , 1974), 85-116.

[46] Fowler, Stages of Faith , 24-31; Sharon Parks, The Critical Years: The Young Adult Search for a Faith to Live By (San Francisco: Harper, 1986) , 107-32; Fischer, The Inner Rainbow, 5-26; Afrie Songco. Joye, "Imagination and Faith Development," Princeton Theological Seminary, TS, Aug. 1981.

[47] Whitehead, Process and Reality ,180-3.

[48] Maria Harris has creatively developed the theme that religious imagination is at the heart of transformative teaching. Maria Harris, Teaching

The congregation, through Christian education, has the task to stimulate and nurture the imagination by creating reshaping, and bringing alive significant religious symbols, images, and stories. The faith community needs to highlight significant symbols and images. We make meaning out of these symbols and myths that touch the deepest level of our being. Recovery of the imagination moves us to the unconscious level, which is the deepest level of our psyche. "Memory is the basis of hope."[49] The stories of God's act of love throughout history reveal the never-ending goodness and greatness of God. This gives hope and courage to live on in faith.

Revelation is "mediated through symbols, that is to say, through an externally perceived sign that works mysteriously on the human consciousness so as to suggest more than it can clearly describe or define."[50] The incarnation is a symbol in the deepest sense of God's grace.

To nurture the imagination, we need to release our minds from the stereotypes and misconceptions of the concept of the imagination. Stereotypes depict imagination as fantasy. The imagination gives impetus to the creation of fairy tales and fiction, poetry, and the arts.[51] Further, we need to move from the over-stressed prosaic to a more poetic world of language and meaning in order to reach the deeper thoughts and feelings within each of us. We must love and trust our own powers of imagination and

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and Religious Imagination: An Essay in the Theology of Teaching (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987).

[49] Fischer, The Inner Rainbow, 104.

[50] Avery Dulles, "The Symbolic Structure of Revelation," Theological Studies 41, no. 1 (March 1980): 55-6.

[51] Fischer, The Inner Rainbow, 6.

be at home in the world of metaphor, poetry, image and art. We need to cultivate an eye for seeing clearly, an ear for hearing better, hands for touching warmly, nose for sensing beauty. We should offer more significant positive images and help persons become aware of these images. A time for dialogue to share and interpret symbolic meanings is in order. We need to increase people's awareness of negative, dehumanizing images that are contrary to our basic theological-biblical understanding of life. Foremost images are the image of Christ, a servant leader, the symbol of water as cleansing and transforming, bread and wine as celebration and repentance, Easter as hope, promise, and new life. Teachers and leaders with creative and healthy imagination can use extensively the shared praxis approach of sharing life stories and hopes, in dialogue with biblical storiesand visions, for the full realization of the kingdom of God.[52]

We can seek many different settings of ministries in which we can tell stories, do creative movement, dance, read poetry, dramatize. Slowly and patiently, teachers need to use various forms of expressions to unlock the imagination of persons. Along with churches, seminaries and centers of continuing education should stress the need for creative ways of using powerfully and effectively the imagination.

Becoming Mentors and Sponsors

God's people in ministry, led by the lay teachers, pastors, and education professionals, acan be open to the opportunity of sponsorship by

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[52] Walter Wink's model for Bible study as a means for transformation is helpful. Dick Murray gives practical suggestions on the use of the Bible for group study. Hans-Ruedi Weber provides examples of innovative Bible study approaches. See Walter Wink, The Bible for Human Transformation: A New Paradigm for Bible Study (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1973); Dick Murray, Teaching the Bible to Adults and Youth (Nashville: Abingdon 1987); and Hans -Ruedi Weber, Experiment with Bible Study (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1981).

the faith community. One important function of the faith community is mentoring and sponsoring. As pointed out earlier, sponsorship involves assuming responsibilities to guide persons in their faith journey. Mentoring constitutes a more specific way of guidance in response to the particular needs of the learners. Congregations that provide a secure, challenging, and nurturing place for persons in search of meaning tend to be a helpful sponsoring community

Teachers can only share so much of their gifts as they receive gifts of faith and love from the faith community. They must accept nurture from the gathered faith community through participation in corporate worship, study, and other forms of ministry. As they give through their teaching, they need to grow in receiving from the life and ministries of the church. Christian education for transformation happens within the context of a faith community. The faith community prepares and strengthens us for the essential work of reconciliation that God's people are called to do. Teachers and leaders are no exception.

Daniel Day Williams strongly emphasizes that the faith community is essential in finding expressions of our God-given creativity and freedom and in putting love into action.[53] The fact that we are created for communion in love and freedom makes the church all the more important, Williams points out.[54]

Teachers and professional educators enhance healthy emotions and life-sustaining values partly through their own self-determination and partly through the life of the faith community. The experience of transcendent

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[53] Williams, The Spirit and the Forms of Love , 273, 188.

[54] Ibid., 136.

moments and lasting hope and joy arises from their deep-rooted faith and responsible caring.

Teachers cultivate strong relatedness with the Creator-Redeemer as a result of the nurture of the faith community. Westerhoff, Groome, and Williams firmly underscore the indispensable place of the faith community in the faith-seeking and meaning-making of persons. The faith community can become a supportive and primary setting to relive God's story and relate with the participants' stories and to work towards the realization of the vision of God's reign. Involvement in a witnessing faith community tends to enhance and sustain a sense of joy, hope, and faith, whether the community upholds Christian values and beliefs or other religious traditions. As the Christian community fulfills the reconciling and healing work of Christ within and outside its fold, teachers and leaders and the rest of the congregation need to grasp the community's vision and to experience the reality of healing. Caring teachers and leaders can reveal the integrity of the church's ethos through the lives they touch and influence in the community.

To a large extent, teachers and leaders fulfill their tasks when the faith community becomes a nurturing community. Nurture should come from its various ministries, including worship, teaching, fellowship. Strong pastoral and lay leadership characterized by servanthood ministry is essential in the nurturing process. It is vital, therefore, to keep the lines of relatedness securely attached to the Source, Who manifests agape love. An ongoing process of evaluation of where the faith community is and where it is going must be a priority.

To move into accomplishing the church's nurturing task, teachers and leaders can use a planning process that begins with the formulation of a goal

statement for a year.[55] In this strategy, the leaders take time to identify the gifts of every member, and all of the job responsibilities that are needed to have a vital, growing faith community. The identification process involves time and energy, but it pays off a hundred times. One big problem encountered by many congregations is that they tend to rush to fill positions by the end of each year, and officers learn about their job halfway into their term. They repeat the process annually. Preservice and in-service training are minimal and tend to be on the fringes of the church's agenda or activities.

The assigned leaders need to invite individually every church member to share her/his gifts and interests, starting with the possible leaders and teachers. While they implement the process, the pastor and lay leaders teach and train new leaders through Bible study and other study groups, provide meaningful worship, counseling, visitation of the sick, the aged, the inactive, the dropouts, the unchurched, serve the immediate community and the larger society in socio-economic programs. Those who accept the invitation for a job get assimilated into the church life and receive initial training.

The danger of overstressing the planning process is the tendency to lose sight of their overall purpose for being the Body of Christ rather than simply a social institution. Long-range planning can be productive and beneficial if the church has established a clear sense of purpose. Church councils, commissions, and other organized decision-making bodies should move from responding solely to immediate needs and concerns to taking more bold, innovative steps to form a more responsibly caring faith community.

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[55] George E. Scheitlin and Eleanore L. Gillstrom, Recruiting and Developing Volunteer Leaders , ed. Frank W. Klos (Philadelphia: Parish Life, 1973), 15- 22.

Foremost in some churches' agenda is meeting the financial responsibilities, the budget. Who would not be concerned when bills, apportionments, and salaries require monthly payments? However, the testimony of many churches prove that financial giving tends to increase when the church provides need-fulfilling ministries. The philosophy is that when the church does its work, members tend to join and money is assumed to come. It may sound scary and risky to advise members not to worry about meeting the church's yearly budget. But, testimonies of many churches show that to start with a clear mission and vision and to implement the ministries that accomplish the church's primary purpose for existence ultimately solves a realistic financial problem.

Adult Christian education poses a real challenge to the church due to its lasting impact on children, youth, and adults and on the quality of church leadership. The faith community through its leadership team needs to be equipped to provide sound adult Christian education. Faith development of persons of all ages hinges largely on how well adults have been nurtured in faith. Adults communicate their faith to their children and help them grow in faith.[56] Meaningful participation in Bible study and action-reflection groups in the church tend to enrich the faith of the leaders.

All lay professionals, lay teachers, and pastors need to work more at cultivating their perception of the future, a broader picture of the church's mission and the wholeness of persons. We seem to have many members who emphasize the present situation with all the hurdles and see less of the possibilities for the future with risks and hindrances along the way. The goal of many churches seems to be survival rather than dreaming and innovating

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[56] See Westerhoff, Will Our Children Have Faith?

for growth and vitality. The challenge for the leaders is to cultivate more innovators and visionaries.

The laos should also be attuned continually to the rapidly changing conditions in their immediate communities, the larger society, and the global village. Along with such awareness, they need to harness their understanding of the Scriptures and continue to discover the message of faith in people's lives.

Recognizing the vital place of Christian education, congregations should challenge the institutional church to give more support to the lay professionals in Christian education. For example, the church should interpret the work of these persons to both the clergy and laity, provide them places of leadership, ensure that congregations with employed education persons receive the necessary moral and monetary support, and implement the priority goals of Christian education.

The leaders, particularly the education professionals and pastors should set aside at least half a day each week for reading resources beyond what is required, including the Bible, theology, social sciences, counseling, novels, biographies, or books about hobbies. They also need added time for nonmental, fun activities. A helpful way to be nurtured and to nurture others is to teach a Bible study class. Pastors and lay leaders who teach adult groups and encourage dialogues tend to contribute toward Bible literacy of their people and build trusting communities within the church. To keep them equipped as theologians-in-residence, they need to enroll in continuing educational courses and seminars that will enrich both their professional and personal lives.

To live their faith, God's people should participate in advocacy groups that support social, political or economic causes. For example, Amnesty

International, League of Women Voters, Bread for the World, Habitat for Humanity support the rights of particular groups of oppressed people. Better yet, these people should participate in a first-hand experience with the poor, the marginalized, and other oppressed. They need to be immersed into the world of the poor and other oppressed people, even temporarily. To share these experiences with their congregation can strengthen the linkage with them and help shape congregational life.

Lay educators and pastors need to be cautious not to allow the administrative responsibilities to dominate their work. Many times educators spend so much time recruiting teachers that they neglect to nurture themselves and others. A veteran church educator once said that we have more Christian educators holding markers and pens running around classrooms to see if teachers have supplies than those holding the Bible and the newspaper engaged in dialogue and theological reflection with an adult group.[57]

Lastly, lay professional educators, lay teachers, and pastors should be at the forefront in enabling local church and judicatory leaders to be aware of the critical role of the professional educators in the nurture of persons of all ages. They need to be assertive in presenting the nature of the work and expectations of professional educators.

Exercising Power Effectively

Another visible manifestation of shared leadership is the sharing and effective use of power. To capture God's vision of compassionate justice and to embrace the healing and redemptive manifestations of God's work involves

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[57] Richard Murray, lecture notes of author, Christian Educators Fellowship National Conference, Glorietta, New Mexico, October 1980.

a creative use of power. The people of God need to exercise power to make known what God is doing in the world and to draw out a response of faith. Clergy and laity use power to fulfill their prophetic function as well as their servant leadership, evangelistic outreach, and teaching roles. To become effective in their roles, they must know how to use power wisely. The capacity to exercise power effectively in the context of the faith community enhances the competence and faithfulness of God's call to be servant leaders, evangelists-teachers, and prophets.

Power is the "ability to do or effect something or anything, or to act upon a person or thing."[58] It is the ability to accomplish goals and objectives. Power is both a gift (God's power in humanity and the world) and something achievable (human power). God has empowered individual persons to be partners in the work of creation, redemption, and reconciliation. God's Spirit has given everyone the power to continue the ministry that the Incarnate Christ has started (Acts 1:8). We have the power to shape and to reshape our world, and to be reshaped ourselves.

Two related goals of the church are to help persons foster interrelatedness and responsible caring to the end that they manifest imago Dei in themselves and in all relationships, and to enable persons to be faithful to their vocations in the faith community and in the world. To accomplish these goals requires wise use of power by the pastors, lay educators, lay teachers and leaders.

Pastors, lay professional educators, and lay teachers need to pursue actively a more effective, positive use of power. In summary, three

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[58] "Power," Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed.

movements are proposed as a guide to enhancing their exercise of power, characterized by persuasion and compassion.

1. Moving into greater self-acceptance. Self-acceptance begins with a recognition of our identity in the context of God's creation. The more we accept our strengths and limitations, the less we tend to criticize and control other persons. We tend to tolerate the inadequacies and failures of others and our differences with them when we acknowledge and take responsibility for our own capabilities and weaknesses.

2. Moving into increasing flexibility and adaptability. Self-acceptance opens the possibilities for new and different perspectives and experiences. Rigidity tends to be a sign of lack of self-acceptance and high expectation from others. The more we accept ourselves, the more tolerant and flexible we tend to become.[59] In the Christian perspective, flexibility and adaptability can be construed as the capacity to appreciate and appropriate traditions and accept changes that enrich the worshipping, witnessing, teaching, and serving life of the faith community.

3. Moving into greater dependence on God's grace and into greater autonomy for personal growth. It is a paradox to live in complete trust and dependence on God's sustenance and care and to independently work, within a faith community, for one's growth of faith. Divine love undergirds the thinking, feeling, willing, and acting of those who exercise power.

Therefore, lay educators, lay teachers, and pastors should take responsibility for engaging themselves in disciplined growth experiences,

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[59] Walter Brueggemann says that every time we make an ethical decision, we need to pay attention to the "processing space" within us, e.g., "vested interest, fear, and pain." Walter Brueggemann, "Value Formation," lecture notes of author, United Methodist, Church General Board of Discipleship, Nashville, November 1981.

individually and in community.[60] It is tempting to get so involved in the routine maintenance functions of the church's ministry that pastors and church educators find themselves lacking in professional development and spiritual growth experiences. An intentional effort of practicing individual, disciplined "holy habits"and of creating and sustaining genuine trust relationship with a support - colleague group are big steps to take for growth as a person and effectiveness in fulfilling their functions.

An authentic leadership of being servant leaders, teachers-evangelists, and prophets hinges on their exercise of power, beginning with their response to God's power. Those who have emerged as competent and committed leaders have demonstrated effectiveness in one or more of these roles. Pastors, lay professionals, and lay teachers in Christian education have provided important specialized leadership in churches.

In summary the people of God, particularly the entrusted leadership group, foster healthy relatedness and responsible caring when: (1) they enhance a sense of wonder and hope, (2) grow in self-understanding, (3) cherish others, (4) deepen their own imagination and the faith community's imagination, (5) become mentors and guides, and (6) share and use power to fulfill God's vision of a healing, reconciling, just, and caring world. To accomplish these tasks demands that teaching and leading in the faith community integrate the goals.

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[60] The thinking of John Harris has been helpful in developing the movements. Harris has presented three elements of self-awareness which pastors need in order to lead. These are: moving into anxiety, moving into autonomy, i.e., "the inner confidence that s/he survive outside the church;"(144), and moving into a self-realization that "the [institutional] church cannot be counted on to be a sensitive and wise employer for [her] him." Harris, Stress, Power and Ministry, 142-56.

CHAPTER 7

Issues and Proposals: Teaching Functions and Curriculum Guidelines

Teaching is the pathway to discernment, perceptual change and life transformation; thus, it plays a critical role in a community of faith. Some of the most important tasks of teaching are to increase self-understanding, involvement in social justice, and responsible caring for God's people and all creation. In fulfilling these tasks, teaching uncovers and nurtures life-enhancing relatedness. Thus, teaching is at the heart of congregational life. Teaching is a primary vehicle by which two or more individuals in the faith community engage themselves in recreative, interactive, and transformative activities.

Teaching Functions

Teachers and leaders face the challenging tasks of enabling learners to relate meaningfully with God, with themselves, and with the world. Teaching, therefore, needs to be relational. I propose that we view teaching as having six primary functions in the the faith community. These teaching functions consist of the sacred, the congregational, the evangelistic, the ethical, the prophetic, and the aesthetic. Each function has a corresponding teaching approach and relates to a specific characteristic of the faith community. Other functions could be added, such as the developmental, but these will not be explored here.

The Sacred Function

The sacred function underscores Williams' focus on human relatedness with God in Christ. Since the covenant relationship is at the heart of God's continuing work of creation, redemption, and reconciliation and human participation in these acts of grace, an encounter with the numinous becomes a goal of teaching. The task of teaching is to guide learners to an experience of the Holy in their midst and to inspire and challenge them to respond in faith.

An awareness of the Holy comes through both planned and spontaneous teaching, especially when teaching is characterized by a sense of expectancy. Receptivity to the workings of the Spirit allow for a meaningful encounter with the Holy and for making meaning of present experiences. Learners may sense God's presence as they interact with teachers and fellow learners who demonstrate compassion. Teachers cannot plan for decisive moments of encounter, nor can they predict that a particular activity will invoke an encounter. They can prepare themselves, however, by becoming receptive themselves to the leading of the Spirit. For example, one group of four and five-year-old children watched intently as a cocoon emerged into a butterfly. As they looked in amazement and awe, the teacher spontaneously started singing "God Made Us a Beautiful World," and led in prayer. The children joined her. The children's sense of awe and wonder for God's creation was an experience of the Holy.

Williams identifies the church as "a community of life and meaning."[1] The sacred teaching approach focuses on building and strengthening a faith

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[1] Williams, "The Centrality of Christ," p. 5.

community of care through various educational settings. The whole community attempts, through the guidance of its teachers, to make visible God's healing and reconciling love in Christ.

A community of meaning relates the teaching content with present-day experiences, so that learners might be transformed in their perspectives, behavior, attitudes, and values. A meaningful encounter with the Spirit can lead to transforming expressions of faith for all involved. Teachers and learners become care-givers and meaning-makers. They provide care and create meaning as they manifest the _imago Dei_ in their relationships with one another. When this happens, Williams' hope to cultivate a "sense of eternity" becomes a present reality.

To enable the teaching community to fulfill its sacred task, churches need meaningful worship in the congregational service of worship, and also, in church schools. Worship should be an important part of Sunday school teaching. Teachers need to set aside time for group worship or devotion in each session. A song, prayer, litany, short story, Bible verse, or a summary of the session can comprise the worship experience and evoke a sense of God's presence.

One way to enhance worship experience in the church school is to be intentional in planning for a worship center. Young children, for instance, grow to appreciate the Bible as a significant symbol when they see it each Sunday in a special place and when their teacher refers to it often. With a vivid image of the Bible, persons grow in appreciation of the Bible as a primary guide to their faith.

Spiritual retreats for teachers can enrich their faith so that they can guide others in their faith journeys. A small membership Korean church on the East coast conducts two retreats a year to inspire and challenge their

teachers and to motivate potential teachers to take on the challenges as well. The retreat setting has worked in many communities; teachers return to their classes refreshed and renewed.

To deepen the learners' relationship with God, teachers can teach the learners to pray. Teachers need, also: to listen and be aware of persons' joys and hurts; to be flexible with plans to allow for learners' needs in the moment; and to allow the Spirit to guide the class session. Also important is making the Bible come alive with varied teaching methods. The teachers' enthusiasm and preparation can help the learners explore biblical and other images of God as faithful, compassionate, righteous, and just. The power of those images can invoke a close connection with God and a clear self-identity of the community as God's people.

The Congregational Function

By virtue of its calling, the congregation is entrusted with the care of the teachers and learners to equip them for the task of fulfilling God's work of cultivating love for God and for one another. If the key to effective and committed teaching lies with the teachers, then the church must provide nurture for them. One church started a "Mothers and Others" group which has become a nurturing community for some their present and prospective church school teachers. Originally intended to be a monthly gathering, the group has been meeting weekly for Bible study to respond to their needs. A primary task of the church is to tend people's spirits in order for them to grow in the spirit and mind of Christ.

A key teaching approach in congregational teaching is enculturation, or making the life of the community the center of learning. John Westerhoff strongly advocates this model. In this approach, the different church groups are made aware of the educational dimension of their shared life--decision-

making, planning, and acting.Intergenerational teaching and learning is included in this approach. The base of enculturation is the church as a nurturing, fellowship (koinonia) whose sense of caring extends to the world.

The church is not totally responsible for enculturation. The home must be a partner in the nurture of faith.[2] Adults are models, communicators of the faith and bearers of Christian values. This requires the church to provide effective adult Christian education. The church needs to nurture parents in the study of the exploration of Scripture and their faith, rather than concentrate on children alone. A vital Christian education arises from a vital congregation of adult learners. The church should realize that children are nurtured only as the adults who teach them are nurtured. The church must reach to more homes both of members and nonmembers, and extend to them a warm heart.

The Evangelistic Function

The evangelistic function is served by invitational teaching. Teachers invite the learners to make a personal commitment to be faithful to the covenant relationship. Teachers are the evangelists whose primary goal is to lead the learners into making a commitment to a loving relationship with God, oneself, and the world. The goal is conversion and transformation.[3] The initial task is to reach out, incorporating learners in a group and cultivating mutual trust with them. The faith community serves as the communicator of faith.

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[2] Horace Bushnell pointed out in his book, Christian Nurture , the vital place of the home in the Christian development and growth of persons, particularly children. Horace Bushnell, Christian Nurture (New York: Scribner's, 1912). In its present form it first appeared in 1860.

[3] Education theorist Mary Boys has defined evangelism as "preaching or teaching the Scriptures in such a way as to arouse conversion." Mary C.Boys, Educating in Faith: Maps and Visions (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), 13.

Some findings in a national research reveal that the primary reasons why people come to the Sunday church school, which are also considered the greatest strengths of small membership churches, are: sense of warmth and friendliness, committed and trained teachers and members, and supportive pastors.[4] The implication is that teaching is a whole church function. The church in general and a Sunday School class in particular need to create a sense of a warm, caring community which initially draws searching learners and motivates them to stay. Further, capable and compassionate teachers who keep on growing in the faith and encouraging learners to do likewise at their own pace are the best evangelists.

Innovative ways to fulfill the evangelistic function must be used, in terms of settings, outreach strategies, and curriculum resources. For example, teaching can be conducted in homes, backyards, apartment clubhouses, garages, or under trees. Teaching may include intergenerational activities, adult forums, and rallies for children and youth within the church and in the community. Churches can discover potential participants for study groups from a survey of neighborhood townhouses, apartment complexes, and realtors' listings of new residents. The survey gives a clue as to the types of teaching ministry relevant to the people. Survey findings may result in the formation of an outpost Bible school for children and youth, adult Bible studies and prayer, and fellowship groups.

A community forum sponsored by one or more churches and synagogues can become an effective medium to inform and sensitize people on current socio-economic-political issues and the role of faith. Forums tend to attract

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[4] Warren J. Hartman, " Small, But Strong," _Discipleship Trends_ , United Methodist Church, Aug. 1984: n.pag.

people in communities with large numbers of college graduates, white collar, professional persons. Some topics might be the relationship between environmental issues and faith traditions, religion and politics, religion and the workplace, leisure and Sabbath time, and Jewish-Christian-Islam dialogue.

The lay academy of religion can also be effective in offering a variety of courses on faith in relation to the Bible, theology, social issues, and the arts. Unlike the forum series, lay academies provide intensive, short-term enrichment whereby participants meet several times to complete a course. Although academies tend to reach only the members of a congregation and have limited course offerings, the key purpose is to bring persons into a learning situation to help enhance a vital covenant relationship with God and to equip persons to be co-partners with God in works of healing and reconciliation.

The Ethical Function

One of the goals of Christian education is to help students acquire ethical values and make ethical decisions.[5] Religious educators hope for a paradigm shift, or a transformation of beliefs, attitudes, and values. Some church groups emphasize this task more than others. However, we should not emphasize moral teachings in such a way that students will live by the letter of the law rather than by the spirit of love. The teachers' primary task is to guide learners in discerning and appropriating faith to the end that their ethical decisions will be faithful to their covenant relationship with God

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[5] United Methodist Church, Foundations for Teaching and Learning in the United Methodist Church: A Statement of the Division of Education, Board of Discipleship, The United Methodist Church (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1979), 46-7.

The faith community becomes a mediator of Christian values. A mediator is one who intervenes, acts as an intermediary agent in bringing about peace or effecting reconciliation.[6] The faith community conveys God's message of God's kingdom to the people. What it means to be in the kingdom of God becomes the guiding values and vision of the community.

Williams' description of the church as a bearer of God's grace correlates with the church as a mediator of Christian values. The faith community encourages its members to concretize in daily living the meaning of reconciliation and healing. The community must internalize and live out its vocation to discover and witness for God's kingdom of just caring and compassionate justice.

How do we fulfill the ethical function? We need to allow the students to think and to discover for themselves the answers to ethical questions. A key approach to teaching is action-reflection with emphasis on questioning, exploring open-ended stories, and dialoguing. These activities stimulate, probe, provoke, disturb, and lure. The use of methods like drama, open-ended stories, and stimulating questions can help students to reflect and to act. Daniel Day Williams' and Richard Niebuhr's approach of asking an ethical question is worth using. They suggest that we ask first, What is God doing here? Then follow with the question, How are we to respond.[7] We do not start with the immediate attempt to solve the problem. We need to verbalize and internalize our view of God in Christ as actively working in history, creating, redeeming, and reconciling the world. Thomas Groome's shared

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[6] "Mediator," Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed.

[7] See Williams, Essays in Process Theology, 98-117. See H. Richard Niebuhr, The Responsible Self: An Essay in Christian Moral Philosophy (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1963), 47-68.

praxis approach of sharing faith history, personal story, the vision of God's kingdom, and personal vision is also a valuable teaching approach.[8] A large part of this approach is reflection and action on the people's stories and visions. Another helpful tool is Paulo Freire's pedagogical approach of heightening awareness of our present world and the oppressive forces in and around us, stirring people to act for social justice.[9]

In these days of media bombardment with a variety of values, the church needs to sharpen the teaching method of shared praxis that stresses ethical action. Both learners and teachers need to capture the ethical message of faith and live it in all relationships. Shared praxis allows teachers and learners to reflect together on their present situation and visions, as well as on God's Story in the past and present and God's vision of shalom/salaam. Reflection begins in action and moves back into new decisions for action. The prophetic function draws similar responses, but has a different focus.

The Prophetic Function

Like preaching, teaching is a prophetic task. The preacher and teacher present the Word. In teaching, learners are often given opportunity to respond during a session. They can probe, question, comment, criticize, and suggest. Like the ethical function of teaching, the prophetic function can use the shared praxis approach to grapple with issues and to discover the meaning of faith for today's life. The approach encourages participation by reflecting and listening, not feeling intimidated. An accepting, trusting climate makes it less threatening for people to share their feelings and their stories.

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[8] See Groome, Christian Religious Education.

[9] See Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed.

Prophetic teaching increases the consciousness of teachers and learners to identify evil and good and the moral responsibilities of the people of God. The nature of prophetic teaching calls for action to liberate oppressed people from injustice. When prophetic teaching has been done, students should leave a class feeling empowered to live their faith. An Old Testament class on the eighth century prophets in a denominational seminary did just that. The teacher's exposition and class discussion moved the students to share and apply the prophetic message by pushing for school reforms to hire more ethnic minority and women faculty and staff, by cultivating a piece of unused land on the school property as a vegetable garden, and by participating in an ecumenical "Peace with Justice" network.

A key to effective teaching with a prophetic thrust is to expose the learners to settings that depict the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalized. Teaching must evoke a heightened consciousness to the demands of the Gospel and critical judgment regarding the demands of the dominant culture. Students and teachers who experience the impact of prophetic teaching respond in acts of responsible caring.

Teaching that performs all of the above functions requires more than intellectual acumen of interpreting and transmitting beliefs and traditions. Teaching needs critical reflection and action in a trusting environment as well as awareness of and responsiveness to the intuitions and imagination.

The Aesthetic Function

The arts help fulfill the various tasks of teaching by expressing our faith symbolically. Since human beings find meaning in expressive and affective ways, the arts elegantly respond to the individual's search for transcendence. Alfred North Whitehead speaks of the arts in a way common in Christian tradition to speak of symbols and sacraments, "the outward and visible sign

of an inward and spiritual grace."[10] The arts are a valuable tool in teaching and learning and in giving expression to human experience. As experience gives birth to beliefs, and conceptualization analyzes and interprets, Christian symbols and images mediate meaning and help form Christian identity.[11] The emphasis on rational, cognitive functionings in the North American culture makes it even more important to stress the vital place of the arts in teaching.

We need to nurture the religious, affective dimension in each of us because expressing ourselves through the arts enables us to reach to the depths of our being. We express our creativity through the arts. Many artistic religious expressions in music, dance, drama, storytelling, painting, and sculpting tend to bring harmony out of chaos, unity from divisiveness, and truth where there is falsehood. The presence of false and incongruent art is real; the faith community needs to be aware of this reality. While the arts evoke emotional responses and can unearth feelings, the arts can also cultivate cognitive dialogue and reflection. Both affective and reflective learning take place. In teaching, we need to provide more creative opportunities with balanced use of affective and cognitive dimensions of learning.[12] For example, in dramatization for all ages, the learners and teacher can feel vicariously the characters' emotions, can reflect on and discuss the issues being raised, and can express constructively their own

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[10] Alfred North Whitehead, Religion in the Making (New York: World Press, 1960), 127. Quoted by Fischer, The Inner Rainbow, 57.

[11] Lane, ed., 114.

[12] See Margaret Krych, Teaching the Gospel Today: A Guide for Education in the Congregation (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1987).

feelings and thoughts through acting.

Effective teaching incorporates the arts. Specifically, storytelling is an art form vital to creative teaching. Stories evoke thoughts, feelings, action. Thus, stories influence a community's life. Stories reveal truth to us in a vivid, indirect way.The indirectness and subtlety of truth disclosure can make storytelling nonthreatening. Stories raise our social consciousness, as we discover specifically from the stories of the Asian and Latin American theologians who have used stories extensively to illustrate oppressive situations and inspire strategies for liberation.[13] Maxine Greene and Paulo Freire have emphasized the importance of heightening our awareness and making meaning of our world through education.[14] John Snow says that during this "mean time" of continual transitions and paradigm shifts, the shared stories and anecdotes, not beliefs and certainties, nourish and compel us to live meaningfully.[15]

In sum, this section has examined six teaching functions and the corresponding teaching approaches. Also, some descriptions of the faith community correspond especially well with these various functions. Such a schema of different approaches has been developed in more detail elsewhere, but this schema serves as a summary of the six functions we have discussed earlier.[16]

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[13] Mary Elizabeth Moore, " Narrative Teaching: An Organic Methodology," Process Studies 17 (Winter 1988): 248-61.

[14] Greene, 299-317.

[15] John Snow, The Impossible Vocation: Ministry in the Mean Time (Cambridge: Cowley, 1988).

[16] Some terms and concepts, particularly enculturation, interpretation, and liberation, are adapted from Jack Seymour and Donald Miller's

FUNCTIONS	TEACHING APPROACHES	NATURE OF FAITH COMMUNITY
Sacred function	Relational	Community of care & meaning
Evangelistic	Invitational	Proclaimer of the Word
Congregational	Enculturation	Fellowship, Nurturing
Ethical	Shared praxis	Mediator of Christian values
Prophetic	Interpretation and liberation	Community of shalom/ salaam
Aesthetic	Teaching through the arts	Community of imagination

Curriculum

The theology of Daniel Day Williams calls the church through its educational ministry seriously to attend to and evaluate its curriculum. Further, his concepts of the church, persons, God, and relationships give insights for designing and implementing a curriculum that uncovers and nurtures relatedness and responsible caring. Curriculum is a key educational component that can bring about a strong interrelatedness of persons with God and the world. When we observe or participate in a vital church, we usually find that the various forms of ministries connect one individual life

Contemporary Approaches to Christian Education . The book deals with broad Christian education themes, using psychological, sociological, philosophical, and theological perspectives. Its purpose is to help us discern the different streams in Christian education theory and practice. Teaching is one of their emphases, while our particular study deals primarily with teaching functions and approaches, especially teaching that nurtures healthy relatedness and responsible caring. See Jack Seymour and Donald Miller, Contemporary Approaches to Christian Education (Nashville: Abingdon, 1982).

with another and with the Other. Everything that the faith community does and plans to do in relation to Christian education is curriculum. Jack Seymour gives a broad definition by saying that curriculum is "the total range of experience which the church provides."[17] Randolph C. Miller views curriculum as "those experiences which the church provides."[18] Religious education theorist Allen Moore views curriculum as the church's program of Christian education, including its "organization, settings for learning, groupings of learners, and content."[19] A narrower, more specific definition of curriculum which many local church people perceive is the written resources for teaching and learning.[20] Curriculum as we use it in this section is the planned and unplanned experiences of teaching and learning in the faith community, and the curriculum resources that support teaching and learning

Curriculum includes a gamut of components. Similar to those identified by Mary Elizabeth Moore, these components consist of teachers and students, teaching experiences, environment, printed and audio-visual resources, and other human resources.[21] Curriculum consists of two general categories: the explicit and the hidden. Explicit curriculum is the content and plan for learning that we provide to the learners. Hidden curriculum is the ethos of

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[17] Jack Seymour, " The Untried Curriculum: The Story of Curriculum Development for Protestant America, _Confrontation Curriculum_ (Nashville: Christian Educators Fellowship, 1982), 11-26.

[18] Randolph C. Miller, _Christian Nurture and the Church_, 76.

[19] Allen Moore, "The Future of Church Curriculum," _Confrontation Curriculum_ (N ashville: Christian Educators Fellowship, 1982) , 86.

[21] Ibid., 178-87.

the church that is implicitly and indirectly taught and caught.[22] Hidden curriculum includes the emotional climate and interactive life in the congregation, communication patterns of members, decision process on the various aspects of church functions, leadership styles of pastor and members, power distribution.[23] Our primary focus in this chapter is the explicit curriculum.

We will then focus on the more intentional, explicit aspects of curriculum. Williams has stressed strongly that the church is a bearer of grace and is a redemptive, reconciling community. The church that participates in grace reenacts and relives the story of the incarnation and atonement through its ministries. Curriculum, as the educational plan, program, and resources, exists to guide person to manifest the *imago Dei*, increase their responsible caring, strengthen healthy relatedness, and heighten their "sense of eternity." This curriculum emphasizes the nurturing of relationships with God and the world.

The goal of curriculum is to lead persons to commit themselves to God, and thus, to healthy relatedness and responsible caring. Williams' work affirms this purpose of the curriculum. He stresses the goal of drawing persons to a close relationship with God so that they experience creative and redemptive love and thus participate in reconciling work.

The starting point of curriculum, as Mary Elizabeth Moore has said, is

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[22] William Pinar defines hidden curriculum as "the norms and values that are implicitly, but effectively, taught in schools . . . ." William Pinar,ed., *Curriculum Theorizing: The Reconceptualists* (Berkeley: McCutchan, 1975), 96.

[23] See C. Ellis Nelson, ed., *Congregations: Their Power to Form and Transform* (Atlanta : Knox, 1988).

covenant relationship with God and the world.[24] Curriculum must transform the relationships of persons in all dimensions -- from mistrust to respect and acceptance, from divisive actions to shared values, from wasted consumption to responsible stewardship. Williams' emphasis on the universality of the church requires a curriculum that enhances sensitivity, tolerance, and affirmation of life in the midst of differing and sometimes conflicting views. Curriculum should endeavor to foster greater partnership with people of other religious or ethnic traditions, while remaining rooted in one's own tradition.
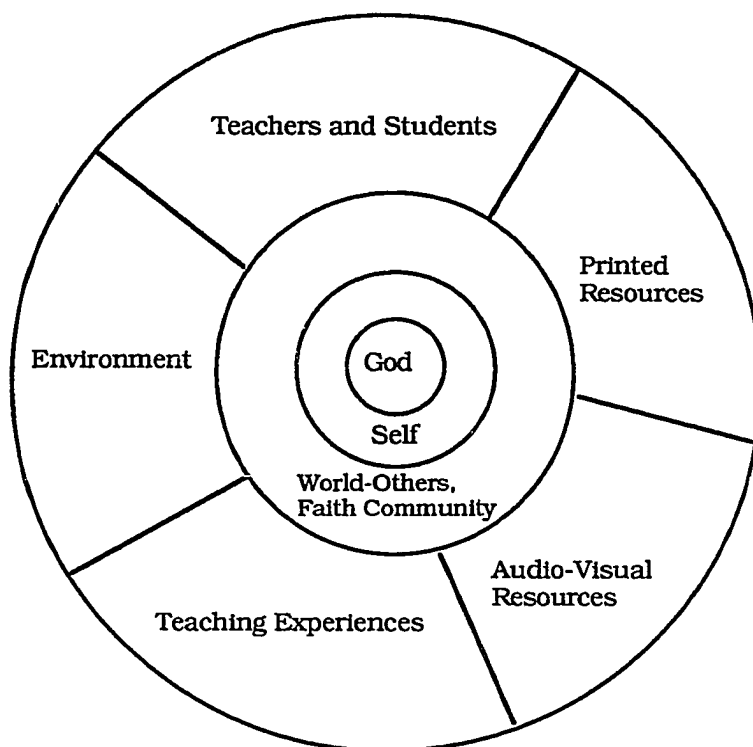
The curriculum content needs to embody theological and biblical perspectives that stress God's actions of love through Christ and the call for partnership with God in redemption and reconciliation. It needs to incorporate Williams' concepts that stress the covenant story, the story of God's redemption, and Christ's atonement, the tradition of the universal church, and the faith community's interpretation of the story, and the community's common life. Also, the content needs to be based upon psychological and educational concepts to meet the learning needs of persons in various stages of development.

Explicit curriculum has several components; each one is vital to teaching. Each curriculum component is important in helping learners and teachers make meaning and grow in faith. The five components of curriculum, which are teachers and students, printed resources, audio-visual resources, teaching experiences, and the environment, can strengthen life-affirming relatedness when they act interdependently and are undergirded by divine love.

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[24] Mary Elizabeth Moore, _Education for Continuity and Change_, 178.

The diagram below illustrates the components of curriculum and the dimensions of relatedness. Healthy relatedness can emerge from a curriculum that is designed to foster learners' understanding of themselves, God, and the world. To be able to grasp God's Story and Vision requires stimulating questions, dynamic interaction, and the use of other teaching methods whereby learners can so immerse themselves in the Story that it becomes alive. The more integrated the parts are and the stronger the undergirding force of divine love, the more effective is the curriculum in the life of the individual and the faith community. The environment is very important, for example, because the room arrangement clearly speaks of the value of learners by its attractiveness, cleanliness, stimulating visual resources. The room motivates and invites everyone to be involved in a meaningful way. Further, teaching experiences that foster relatedness emphasize the reconciling nature of the faith community and the imago Dei nature of persons. Printed and audio-visual resources, the obvious component of curriculum, can contribute to affirming relatedness by encouraging learners to see, hear, and feel God's story and vision, to critically reflect and ultimately to engage in healing, caring, and just acts.

A well-rounded curriculum consists of caring and competent teachers who are reconcilers and bearers of God's grace through their affirmation, attentiveness and empathy. They facilitate the experience of redemption and reconciliation as they relate biblical and theological insights with daily living. Genuine interaction among teachers and learners can draw all of them to a transforming experience with God. Such interactive process provides a stimulus to respond to the leading of God's Spirit.

A curriculum that strengthens the community's sense of interrelatedness and responsible caring could be described by different images, such as : a kaleidoscope, for communicating a variety of meaningful experiences with changing patterns; a wheel, for communicating a balanced curriculum in which the parts are dependent on one another; or a rainbow, for communicating hope. These metaphors describe curriculum that can form and transform lives.

1. **The metaphor of the kaleidoscope.** Resources and plans are like a kaleidoscope; they provide varied experiences that reflect varied perspectives. In a kaleidoscope, the bits of glass change positions in an endless variety of patterns. The kaleidoscopic represents the variety of teaching-learning experiences that are created and reshaped. The teacher guides the students in the production; the creativity of the teacher is

contagious. Together with the students, they form a variety of colors and patterns, images, and symbols.

Resources change in design, content, process to meet learners' needs. Experiences reflect varied patterns as the participants share their own personal stories and hopes. The beauty of the colors depends upon how they handle their differences and conflicts. They can discover beauty and hope in their mutual interaction, when the interaction is characterized by acceptance, respect, and openness. Learners and teachers can feel a sense of excitement and expectation in working and learning together.

2. The metaphor of a wheel. The spokes of the wheels represent teaching activities, the physical and psychological climate, and curriculum resources. Each spoke is interdependent with the other spokes, and is as important as the others. On the one hand, the better the quality of resources, the easier it is for teachers and students to capture the message they attempt to communicate. On the other hand, the more competent and committed the teachers and learners are, the easier it is to utilize the resources meaningfully. This means that all the spokes have a significant part in making the wheel move, in fostering healthy relatedness.

The circle symbolizes the unending process of teaching and learning, the dynamic interaction between students and teachers. The circle refers to the wholeness of the curriculum, that is, the teacher and students appropriating traditions, capturing present moments of discovery, stirring hope, and visioning for the future. Teachers are colleagues, partners in planning, designing, teaching, and learning. The teacher guides the students in learning as a motivator, questioner, and insight giver. Students play similar roles at times. Students and teachers initiate the reflection and action and enable the group to reach its goals. The resources provide tools to stimulate their

thinking and to invoke feelings that can ultimately lead to responsible caring.

3. **The metaphor of rainbow**. The rainbow, characterized by many colors, symbolizes promise, hope, and beauty. The image of the rainbow can evoke change. Curriculum can be compared to the rainbow in that it can become a powerful means for transformation when it motivates learners and teachers to discover beauty and to keep their hopes alive. The various curriculum components reflect many colors, varied choices, unity in diversity. Printed and audio-visual resources communicate pluralism, yet oneness in God's Spirit. Curriculum shaped by a rainbow image would inspire participants to be open to all peoples of faith. Curriculum in this metaphor reflects Williams' concept of the universal nature of the church.[25]

Ecumenical learning resources are examples of curriculum that attempts to make persons aware of the meaning of the church as a universal community of faith. Ecumenical learning "begins with clarifying our identity, involves engagement in our context, reaches out to embrace the peoples of the earth and all creation in its unity under God."[26] It is reflection-action and action-reflection; it is dialogue in which diversities among the participants exist. A goal of ecumenical curriculum is to create and strengthen global consciousness and solidarity for peace and justice.[27]

As learners and teachers focus on their common stories and shared vision, they can discover beauty and hope. The discovery can lead to healing,

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[25] See Williams, _What Present Day Theologians are Thinking_, 183-207.

[26] World Council of Churches and Ecumenical Institute, _Education for Effective Ecumenism_ (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982), 7, 60.

[27] Philip Potter, _Gathered for Life_ (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1983), 200.

reconciliation, liberation, and care for people of different colors, needs, status, lifestyles. If curriculum is to respond effectively to fostering life-sustaining relatedness and responsible caring, then the resources must speak to and reach persons, inside and outside of the church . Curriculum maintains the integrity of its purpose as it keeps firmly focused on the loving acts of the rainbow Maker.

For example, one way to respond to the growing needs of the emerging cultures, particularly with the Korean and the Hispanic communities, is to provide curriculum resources that will speak meaningfully to them. One mistake that is often made, however, is to respond to all requests from various ethnic groups only to find that the primary need is not so much new bilingual resources as ongoing teacher training and support systems for ethnic lay educators and teachers . Unless indigenous curriculum fulfills the communities' goals to know and to grow in faith, the publication of ethnic minority resources would be nonbeneficial to the constituencies the church wants to serve. Curriculum planners and ethnic curriculum leaders need to perceive three crucial issues: (1) ways to accomplish the church's goals through Christian education, (2) ways to assess the real, not imagined, educational needs of the ethnic constituencies, and (3) ways to inspire stewardship of time, money, and talents to strengthen ethnic minority churches' educational ministry.

Some assumptions of curriculum as planned program and resources can help leaders formulate proposals to enhance the educational ministry and caring of the faith community. A few of these assumptions are:

1. Curriculum resources hold the power to either liberate or oppress, to reveal or suppress the truth. Curriculum that is faithful to the church's primary task frees learners and teachers from following a set of laws to

living in love and justice. Further, learners and teachers discover truth when divine love holds a central place in the curriculum.

2. Effective training of teachers and leaders on the use of curriculum resources is as important as having theologically sound curriculum content. The effectiveness of plans and resources can be attributed to trained teachers. Thus, the value of resources depends partly on the adequate training of teachers.

3. Printed curriculum tends to deal inadequately with ethical values, particularly if it involves controversial issues. Sometimes curriculum includes some unclear or one-sided theological positions on ethical issues. The issue of marketability and profitability may account for the discrepancy. If a majority of curriculum users lean to one position, publishers tend to cater to that majority.

4. The formation of a network of qualified church school teachers can help provide training, support, and fellowship.

5. A dichotomy exists between curriculum theory and practice. This is an obvious assumption.[28] Theory includes guidelines of understanding persons in various stages of development, strengthening relationship with God and a faith community that leads to engagement in the world. Many teachers, however, lack the training and the understanding of theology and teaching methods, and hence, fail to follow the theory. The gap exists.

6. The center of authority in the choice of curriculum resources is based upon the theological orientation of the church in general and the teacher in particular.

7. Curriculum developers and implementers need to wrestle with the

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[28] See Seymour, "The Untried Curriculum," 11-26.

relationship of faith and culture and need to be faithful to the fundamental tenets of faith. Dealing with controversial issues does not produce good marketability, but often is necessary to respond to the church's needs.

8. Our interrelatedness with God and the world lays a solid foundation for teachers and leaders who use the curriculum. The rich Judeo-Christian tradition helps us identify and clarify our relatedness.

Recommendations for a Transformative Curriculum

Through the initiative of the lay teachers, professional educators, and pastors, the faith community can help transform the ethos of the church by educating persons as "God's people of the covenant."[29] Such education can be supported by curriculum. Transformative curriculum provides powerful religious images and symbols of persons, places, situations, and ideas; these can heighten people's consciousness of their biblical tradition, present stories, and future hope for shalom-salaam.[30] The parables of Jesus, for example, give strong, positive messages of the nature of God and of ethical implications for faithful living. Resources can be a stimulus to uncover new insights, and they can motivate learners and teachers to interact. The use of Groome's shared praxis approach, Westerhoff's faith community enculturation approach, and Williams' theological-biblical understanding of the church as undergirding force in educational settings can stimulate the imagination for

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[29] Randolph Miller, Christian Nurture and the Church, 189.

[30] Richard (Dick) Murray says that curriculum resources provide images which connect both concepts and feelings and which link into the images learners bring with them. See Richard T. Murray, "Some Things Curriculum Resources Actually Do," Confrontation Curriculum (Nashville: Christian Educators Fellowship, 1982) , 97, 101-2.

ministry in the world.

To be effective, curriculum needs an environment that is open to teaching and learning. We need to strengthen the church/parish school as a center of teaching and learning the faith. The nurture comes from different sources, beginning with meaningful worship and probing Bible study. One way to do this is to recover the holiness of the Sabbath by encouraging participation in both corporate worship and Sunday church school. One suggestion is to insure that Sunday worship and Sunday classes for all ages take place at different times. This is important if the church expects to provide solid nurture of the faith to children, youth, and adults.[31] It is tragic that the Sunday morning pattern of having worship and Sunday school at the same hour exists in many churches. The reality in these churches is that many, if not most adults decide to go to worship and leave the children and youth in the Sunday school classes. Seldom does a majority stay for both, even if the church offers two worship services. One main reason given for having the same hour for church is to have more adults who want to give only one hour on Sundays to come for gathered worship, and thus have the children and youth in the Sunday school. Congregations and parishes iin certain parts of the country face a greater problem of dealing with the issue than other geographical settings which have traditionally pursued separate hours for these two nurturing community experiences.

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[31] According to a national research of one denomination, worship attendance alone without participation in a small group does not necessarily maintain a person's church membership. Interestingly, a strong correlation exists between church membership and church school enrollment. Warren Hartman, a church analyst-researcher, says that changes in church school enrollment precede church membership changes. See Joyce Hopkins, "Sunday School Weathers Storm," United Methodist Reporter, 20 June 1980 : 1. See also Roy Howard Beck, "Alarm Ringer," United Methodist Reporter, 24 May 1985: 3.

Having separate hours gives a more viable opportunity for persons of all ages to participate in both worship and study and to allow the whole family to be in worship together. (Young children may leave halfway through the worship and have their arts activity session.) Further, the separate hours can provide both worship and in-depth study for adults who cannot come during the week and can nurture children and youth through gathered worship of the whole faith community in addition to age-level or group-graded learning. Parents of children, especially young children, tend to prefer to come on Sunday mornings for study. Often on weekdays or weeknights the church can reach adults without young children, or the unemployed adults.

Bishops, district superintendents, judicatory and diocese leaders can use their persuasive influence and present convincing rationale for the values of scheduling separate hours for the two Sabbath traditions which are essential for enhancing healthy relatedness and responsible caring. We need continually to educate the congregation on the importance of involving children and youth in worship on a weekly basis and of involving persons of all ages in study.

Training of teachers and leaders is a must if curriculum resources are to be used effectively. One effective way to train people is to initiate short-term and long-term adult classes for new members and constituents. Potential teachers can come from these nurture groups. Another way to deal with the problem of identifying and supporting teachers is to provide a network of qualified church school teachers as consultants. Forming a network involves serious planning and assistance from educational leaders. An educational staff employed by the judicatory, conference, or diocese can coordinate the networking system and the training opportunities.

Another need is to provide curriculum resources that are focused on

pressing issues of a particular time and place. The need to prepare curriculum far ahead of publication (usually a year ahead) makes some content dated before it is published. We are not fast enough to respond to the burning issues at hand. Some compromise should be made to meet the needs both of editors with deadlines and of curriculum users who need timely issues.

Change in the system of curriculum distribution is also long overdue. Resourcing and delivery systems can be localized. For example, using local religious book stores as centers of distribution can help make curriculum resources more accessible to churches and the general public.[32] This means that the denominational publishers might make available the curriculum resources in local religious bookstores, rather than rely primarily on the mail ordering process for curriculum purchase.

Curriculum resources also include people. Transformative curriculum raises participants' global consciousness. This happens when curriculum design includes an opportunity for the learners to meet human resources in their class session, such as marginalized, unemployed, handicapped, and oppressed persons who are able to tell their stories without feeling used. Testimonies from these people and group reflection can lead to changed values and behavior.

Concluding Statements

Relatedness and responsible caring can be enhanced by attending to four watchwords:[33]

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[32] See Charles Foster, "Curriculum and the Struggle for Power in the Church," Confrontation Curriculum (Nashville: Christian Educators Fellowship, 1982), 43- 63.

[33] The thoughts of Bernard Lonergan on the watchwords for true knowledge have guided the formulation of these key words. His watchwords are: Be attentive. Be intelligent. Be rational. Be responsible.

1. **Be affective and at the same time be thinking.** Relational living has both emotive and cognitive dimensions. Deepest hopes and needs should find expression and fulfillment through life-affirming relationships of care. Servant leadership draws forth empathetic and thoughtful responses to persons at their points of need. The intelligent use of emotion manifests maturity and responsibility. Daniel Day Williams and the other theorists in our study emphasize the affective-cognitive modes in just and caring relationships.

2. **Be critically reflective.** Critical reflection on our identity and vocation, as well as reflection on the Judeo-Christian traditions, can move us to action. Both reflection and action can lead to transformation. Thomas Groome in particular has emphasized the vital role of critical reflection in the nurture of faith. To reflect deeply on the inner self, as Carl Jung has firmly claimed, is a way to self-awareness. Contemplation is another means of reflection.

3. **Be socially involved.** Discernment of our identity as co-participants in God's creative and redemptive acts of love and our response of faithfulness motivate us to be involved for social justice and caring in the world. Our faith calls us to participate in works of justice and caring. The human vocation is to incarnate in the world the renewing work of God's love in the world.

4. **Be responsible.** To be responsive is to respond to God's covenant and to participate with God in creating and healing the world. We are responsible to manifest caring in all of our relationships. We are responsible to uncover and cultivate healthy relatedness wherever we are. This responsibility to provide care for ourselves and others emanates from the relatedness of all

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Quoted from Lane, ed., 143.

God's creation.

In sum, Christian religious education at its best evokes thoughtfulness and affectivity, critical reflection, social involvement, and full responsiveness that result in the enhancement and sustenance of life. Participants in the educational ministry demonstrate the watchwords as they live their faithfulness to God and participate in reconciling, healing ministry. If the church is to nurture healthy relatedness and accomplish the primary task of equipping persons to cultivate responsible caring, then it must strengthen the various components of the educational ministry, guided by the four watchwords.

Individuals within the context of a faith community manifest the fruits of the educational enterprise as they grow in understanding of the self, God, and the world. Transformative education fulfills these goals. As we move into the twenty first century, the faith community faces the task to capture a vision of life-sustaining relatedness and to embrace the passion for responsible caring.

APPENDIX

Questionnaire on the Practice of Ministry

Beside each statement, place a number that best represents the priority which you give to specific areas of ministry.

1. very high priority

2. high priority

3. low priority

4. very low priority

5. no opinion/don't know

_____ A. Individual reading and study, at least weekly.

_____ B. Personal meditation (Bible study and prayer).

_____ C. Involvement on social issues/ programs, such as Bread for the World.

_____ D. Pastoral preaching.

_____ E. Prophetic preaching.

_____ F. Visit to the sick.

_____ G. Visit to the inactive.

_____ H. Evangelistic program to the unchurched.

_____ I. Communication of the nature and mission of the church.

_____ J. Counseling.

_____ K. Teaching of a small group/leading Bible study.

_____ L. Sharing of a dream or vision for the congregation.

_____ M. Providing inspiration and challenge to members to be the Church.

_____ N. Providing recruitment and training of teachers and leaders.

_____ O. Identification and development of leadership.

_____ P. Regular meeting with other ministers.

_____ Q. Other (Please write the form of ministry.)

Rate your congregation on how you perceive its practice of ministry.

    1. very much

    2. quite a lot

    3. some

    4. little

    5. none

    6. not sure

_____ A. Caring- warm and accepting of persons as they are.

_____ B. Have a clear sense of mission.

_____ C. Involved in social issues and programs.

_____ D. Inspired and motivated to pray for one another.

_____ E. Inspired and motivated to do Bible study.

_____ F. Feel positive about your preaching/teaching.

_____ G. Share their dream and goal for the church.

_____ H. Mission-oriented- locally and globally.

_____ I. Appreciate who the minister is and what the minister does.

_____ J. Feel connected with the church system and structure.

_____ K. Other

Adapted from Donald P. Smith, **Congregations Alive: Practical Suggestions for Bringing Your Church to Life Through Partnership in Ministry** (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1981).

Prepared by Afrie Songco Joye, 18582 Warren Avenue, Tustin, California 92680 ,

Conference_____

District _____

Summary of Questionnaire Findings

Total Respondents . . . . . 365, largely local church pastors

The Specific Areas of Ministry That the Pastors Rated as Low and Very Low in Priority, the Number and Percentage of Responses:

1. Visit to the inactive . . . . 229 . . . 63 %

2. Involvement on social issues . . . . 188 . . . 51 %

3. Evangelistic program to the unchurched . . . . 155 . . . 42 %

4. Regular meeting with other ministers . . . . 150 . . . 41 %

The areas of ministry rated high in priority are (in order of importance): (1) pastoral preaching, (2) visit to the sick, (3) providing inspiration and challenge to members to be the church.

Pastors' Responses of "Some" and "Little" to their Congregations' Practice of Ministry, the Number and Percentage of Respondents (305 completed this section):

1. Involved in social issues . . . . .201 . . . .66%

2. Have a clear sense of mission . . . . 195 . . . . 65%

3. Feel connected with church system and structure . 179 . . . . 59%

4. Inspired and motivated to do Bible study . . . . 178 . . . . 58%

5. Mission-oriented . . . . 168 . . . .55%

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